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THE DOUBLE PROPHECY;

OR,

TRIALS OF THE HEART.

BY WILLIAM CARLETON.

(Continued from p. 59.)

As time advanced, Maria began to regain her spirits, and exhibit a cheerfulness of disposition which was not at all affected. She had written several times to her mother, from whom she received gratifying accounts. Many verbal messages, through the kindness of friends and neighbours from her native parish, who were in the habit of attending Armagh market, also reached her. In fact, she felt both comfortable, and we might almost say, happy. Her companions, however, could observe that there were short pauses in this apparent happiness, and that certain periods of depression were in the habit of recurring and exercising such an influence over her as no effort of hers could conceal. They found that she indulged in those principally when alone, where they have sometimes caught her actually in tears. Even in their own society, after indulging in cheerful, if not in mirthful intercourse, they have often known her to withdraw suddenly from the lighthearted spirit of the conversation, and to sigh deeply, but in such a manner, that she appeared to be altogether unconscious of it. To be sure they had their surmises and their theories on the subject, and of course the natural conclusion they arrived at was, that the beautiful Maria Brindsley was, after all, actually in love.

Under such circumstances three months had elapsed, during which period Maria's conduct was a model for modesty and propriety to every young woman in her station of life. She attended church regularly, and returned home without joining her companions in their walks, which they usually took after service. Even Miss Travers thought that she secluded herself too much, and she told her so. Maria, however, only smiled, and said she had no wish to act otherwise than as she did; upon which Miss Travers left her to pursue her own inclinations.

This tale is an authentic history of an individual, and by the necessity which compels us to keep both herself and the course of her life, strange and varied as it was, constantly before our readers, we are prevented from breaking in upon it, either by collateral or adventitious incidents. From this resolution we shall depart, only when their introduction may be necessary to illustrate the progress of her destiny towards its ultimate and

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fixed position. She had then already become the common topic of conversation among the young men of Armagh, and especially among the officers then quartered in its barracks. Nothing, however, detrimental to her moral character was ever breathed against her. The thing, in fact, was impossible. Her prudence, her modesty, and the general propriety of her conduct, defended her as with a shield; but the wonder was among the rakes and profligates, both civil and military, why a creature so beautiful as she was, should appear to be so unconscious of that beauty, and hold herself so completely aloof from those who might otherwise have had some opportunity of addressing her, or of gaining a footing of intimacy with her.

About five months had now elapsed, and Maria, with the exception of Miss Bennet, was, in point of elegant workmanship (if we may be allowed to use the expression) and skill, nearly at the head of the establishment, and Miss Bennet was beginning to tremble for her laurels as a dressmaker—the laurels on any other account having been demolished ever since Maria's residence among them. We need scarcely mention to our readers, that where a set of young, unmarried women are brought together, by any kind of employment that keeps their hands busy, and leaves their tongues at liberty, there will be many and extensive discussions upon individuals of the other sex. This is equally true as respects either country or town; for human nature is the same, whether at a spinning match in a rural village or a coterie of fashionable ladies in a *boudoir*. They will discuss the personal qualities and accomplishments of the opposite sex with as much interest in the one as in the other. So it is, and so it will be to the end of the world.

One day, about this period, the workwomen began to banter each other about their respective lovers, and as the love secrets of such a class are pretty generally known, it happened that the raillery was rather extensive among them. Maria, who never refused to sustain her part in their usual conversations, was silent upon this occasion, simply because she had nothing to contribute to the common topic.

"It's well for Miss Brindsley," said one of them, "that she hasn't seen this handsome young officer, that has been quartered with his regiment the other day in the barracks here. I'll engage she won't have her heart long after seeing him. The whole town's talking about him."

"Oh! I know who you mean," said Miss Travers, who happened to be present,—"Lieutenant Clinton. Miss Brindsley, of course, has seen him often, as he is

from the same parish with herself. It was his mother that recommended her to me, in the highest terms, too, I must certainly say. He was quartered in Kilkenny before he came here, and he certainly is one of the handsomest young officers I ever saw. You must have seen him, of course, Miss Brindsley?"

Maria's tell-tale face became crimson, a fact which was not unobserved by those about her, especially by the keen and malignant eye of Miss Bennet.

"Whether she has seen him or not," observed that lady, "the mention of his name has put her to the blush at any rate; and it is said that young ladies do not blush for nothing."

"Whisht, Miss Bennet!" said Betty M'Clean, "the less you say about blushing the better, feth. We all know that your blushing days are over."

Miss Bennet tossed her head in high disdain, and gave Betty a glance that intimated any thing but a gospel spirit.

"I never pay attention," she replied, "to vulgar impertinence; thank goodness, I'm above that."

"That's bekaise you have too much of your own to regulate," said Betty, returning her a look quite as fiery as hers. "To blush! where the de'il could a blush find a settlement upon so hard a face as yours? Troth, a'd as soon expect a blush from a smith's anvil."

"Silence, Betty!" said Miss Travers, "I'll hear no such language to Miss Bennet."

"Let Miss Bennet keep a civil tongue in her head, then. Why does she do everything in her power to annoy and provoke Miss Brindsley, that offends no one, and least of all her? but de'il a one o' me will stand it. While a'm here a'll protect Miss Brindsley from her impertinent insults."

"But in the mean time, Betty, you haven't given Miss Brindsley time to answer my question," said the mistress of the establishment, assuming as much temper and dignity as she could muster. "Have you ever seen Lieutenant Clinton, Maria?"

"Yes, ma'am, frequently," replied Maria. "Their family and ours attend the same church."

"*Their family and yours*!" exclaimed Miss Bennet, with a stare, which ended in a contemptuous giggle.

"Yes!" replied Maria, whose face now blushed with strong indignation; "*their family and ours*. I hope you understand the words, Miss Bennet. Our ancestors, until a very recent period, were quite as respectable as theirs."

"I should prefer better authority for that fact than your own word," replied the vindictive forewoman.

"Your opinion upon the subject," retorted Maria, "is to me so utterly indifferent and worthless, that if I had the strongest authority in existence, I would not take the trouble of producing it to you. I have borne much unprovoked offence and insult from you, Miss Bennet, I may say, from the first day I entered under this roof; but patience has its limits, and I now assure you that I will bear no more. You must treat me with civility, or otherwise expect to be treated by the same incivility which you may offer to me; self-defence and self-

respect will force me to it, however much against my will."

Miss Bennet had imagined, from the quiet and unassuming manner of Maria, that she was a poor, timid creature, without either spirit or independence; but when she felt the lightning glance which shot from her eyes, as she uttered the last words, she saw clearly that she had mistaken her antagonist altogether, and miscalculated her disposition. On this occasion she made no reply, but began to hum an air to herself, and proceeded with her work. Miss Travers was glad to see this little breeze lulled, and took that opportunity of making further inquiries from Maria of the handsome lieutenant.

"What kind of a character does he bear in his native parish, Miss Brindsley?" she asked.

"He bears an admirable character," replied Maria, her cheeks mantling, and her eye sparkling, as she fixed it upon her opponent with a look of pride and resolution: "he was and is a general favourite with both rich and poor; and, as far as ever I could learn, deservedly so."

"Do you know him personally, Miss Brindsley?" asked Miss Travers, with something of a significant look; "I mean, is there any acquaintance between him and you?"

"None whatever, ma'am; I simply know his person; but we are utterly unacquainted, and never spoke. I wonder, however, how you could imagine, Miss Travers, that a girl in my humble condition of life could be acquainted with a person of his rank. I think you ought to know that it would be neither possible nor proper."

"Well, my dear, you at all events have defended him well."

"I have *not* defended him," replied Maria, with a sparkling eye, "because he does not stand in need of defence; and if he did, I would defend him, and do justice to the absent. I have only repeated the opinion which is abroad of him in his native place, where he is best known; and if he was the humblest man in existence, I would do the same, provided he deserved it."

"Well said, Miss Brindsley," exclaimed Betty M'Clean; "de'il a one of ye but's a right girl; but wait," she added, looking askance at Miss Travers, "wait till you fall in love wi' a gauger, or fater wait till a gauger falls in love wi' you. What's an officer of the army till a keg-hunter?"

This hit honest Betty added, because she thought Miss Travers had catechised Maria too severely, and with some apparent suspicion, upon the subject of young Clinton.

"Did you ever hear, Miss Brindsley," she proceeded, "whether Captain Clinton drinks or not?"

"Betty," said Miss Travers, "you are getting impertinent, and if you continue it, I shall order you out of the room."

"Ay, but de'il a foot a'll go in the mean time; am able to stand my ground any day."

"How dare you attempt to throw ridicule upon the memory of a gentleman?" said Miss Travers, with a face of flame. "How dare you wound my feelings in

the tenderest point, especially when you know the mutual affection which he entertained for me?"

"Deil's cure to you then, what business had you to cross-examine that girl about a gentleman she never spoke to? So now take what you got, and make much of it?"

"I beg you will not quarrel," said Maria; "the subject is one of such perfect indifference to us all, that it is not worth an angry word."

"I beg your pardon, Miss Brindsley," said the proprietress, who, as usual, took the wrong side of the allusion; "I beg your pardon; the subject is one of deep and heartfelt interest to me. The violent and sudden death of that poor gentleman gave me a shock which I have not recovered since."

A knock at the hall-door called her away, or heaven only knows how or when the dispute might have ended.

CHAPTER V.

MYSTERY OF A LETTER—DIABOLICAL PLOT AGAINST MARIA.

OUR readers may perceive that Maria exhibited a spirit of independence and resistance upon this occasion, which she was unconscious, it was probable, of possessing. Miss Bennet made no further attacks upon her, face to face, as she had been in the habit of doing; but from this day out she watched her closely, and hoarded up her malignity for some future opportunity of retaliation. She was not aware, however, that there were other eyes upon herself, and that, so far as Maria was concerned, every motion of her was watched with a degree of vigilance equal to her own.

It would be difficult, indeed, to describe the tumultuous state of feeling by which the bosom of our heroine was agitated upon that night. The image of young Clinton, which had almost been effaced, but never completely removed from her imagination and her heart, had once more been restored to new life and animation. The casual conversation of which he had become the subject, and the fact that he was now residing in the same town with her—that she would have an opportunity of seeing him, and that of course she would most probably be seen by him, and her place of residence discovered, all perplexed and disturbed her; but whether with apprehension or pleasure, she felt it difficult even for herself to determine. She began to wonder, and to ask herself why he should have clung to her memory so tenaciously, and why the recollection of no other man did. At one moment she thought of him with delight, and at another with something like terror. She knew how easily the reputation of a girl circumstanced as she then was might be tarnished. She recollected the affectionate and solemn advice of her mother when parting from her, and her own faithful promise to abide by it. In fact, she remembered every thing that was necessary for her to think of; but notwithstanding this and all, she found that her active and treacherous imagination persisted in returning to the image of the young and handsome lieutenant.

At length she fell asleep, and need we say, that he

became the subject of her dreams. At this period of her life, Maria Brindsley was ignorant of the force and firmness of her own character; but from the spirit and energy with which she checked her rival, Miss Bennet, and the independence with which she replied to Miss Travers on behalf of Clinton himself; but above all, from her firmness in refusing to hear the contents of the sealed paper which Stuart, the spaeman, had written, our readers may form a tolerably correct estimate of her resolution and self-restraint. And perhaps, one of the safest traits in her disposition, was an apprehension that she was deficient in moral strength, and felt the consequent necessity of being doubly vigilant of her own conduct, and the danger of allowing herself to get within the influence of temptation.

On awakening the next morning, her first sensation was one of pleasure and gratification. This feeling, had she had any experience or general acquaintance with life, ought to have alarmed her, and occasioned a good deal of distrust in her own heart. The logic, however, of a beautiful young creature entering her eighteenth year, is by no means a sound code of reasoning in matters connected with the tender passion. Notwithstanding all her theories and resolutions of self-preservation, she actually felt glad that Clinton was quartered in Armagh. True, she never intended, or hoped, or wished to speak to him, and on this account she thought it could be no harm to feel gratified that he was near her, and that she sometimes might have an opportunity of seeing him. This was a slight privilege which she thought a matter of mere indifference, inasmuch as the world could know nothing about it; and thus we love, and thus we reason where we love. We shall soon see, however, in a short time, not only how she loved and how she reasoned, but how she *acted*.

The next Sunday, as usual, she went to church, which was a point of duty she never omitted. She was not, it is true, insensible to the annoyance she had frequently experienced by a number of young men, most of whom were respectable, who stared at her, and made several attempts to speak to her, but thanks to her modesty and prudence, without success. She was known now to be only a dressmaker, and as too many of this class occasionally forget the decorum which should attach to the respectability, of their employment, she was, in consequence, obliged to undergo the same reckless license which the levity of others had entailed upon the whole class. Notwithstanding all this, she frequented her weekly devotions with the strictest regularity, and repelled every unbecoming advance to conversation with quiet and maidenly dignity. On the Sunday in question she took her place in one of the pews on the left hand side as you go down the aisle, in company with Miss Travers and honest Betty McClean. She had not been long seated there when a portion of the —th regiment entered the church, and the officer in charge of them, after looking first to the right, and then to the left, happened to spy her. He refused to follow the sex-toness, who was about to conduct him to another pew, and immediately entered that in which Maria was seated.

To say that he watched and stared at her during the service, is, we presume, unnecessary. In no instance, however, or by no manoeuvre—and he tried several—could he succeed in catching her eye, or in exciting her attention by any possible effort. When service was over, he waited until the congregation had all gone out of church, when he beckoned the sextoness to him, and inquired the name of the young lady who sat in the pew with him.

"Why, there were several, sir, who sat in the pew with you."

"I am aware of that, my good woman, but you must be d—d stupid not to know that the girl I mean is the beautiful creature who sat right opposite myself."

"Oh, sir, I know—she's a dressmaker, and lives with Miss Travers in — street."

"Is Miss Travers a dressmaker?"

"She is, sir; it was she who sat beside the girl you speak of, who lives with Miss Travers."

"And what street is this, you say, that Miss Travers lives in?"

"In — street, sir. As for that beautiful creature, sir, she's the talk of the whole town!"

"The talk of the whole town! What the deuce do you mean by that?"

"Why, simply in consequence of her extraordinary beauty."

"Nothing more? Any scandal about her, eh?"

"No, sir; but instead o' that she has the reputation of being the modestest and best-conducted girl in Armagh."

"Oh, indeed! very creditable to her. I am glad to hear it. I was quite edified by the very nice manner in which she got through her devotions. I am a religious person myself, and like that sort o' thing. Yes, she did her devotions nicely, indeed, and much to my satisfaction. There's a shilling for you, and say when you see her, that I was very much struck by her piety, and her d—d fine face and figure. Say the person she made such an extraordinary impression on is Captain Doolittle of the —th. Or, stay! this is better—here give her this card, and say I shall feel very happy in making her acquaintance."

The poor simple sextoness scarcely understood any thing, further than that the gentleman was very much impressed by her devotional manner, and of course resolved to give her the card upon the very first opportunity.

That evening, after mess, Doolittle asked a few of his brother officers to his private room; among the rest Clinton, whom he specially invited for a purpose with which the reader will soon become acquainted. Of course they had supper, and some card-playing; and after supper, Doolittle addressed Clinton as follows:

"Clinton, I have heard you boast of a celebrated beauty, with whom you are acquainted in your native place, I believe?"

"I beg your pardon, Doolittle," replied Clinton, "I did not say I was acquainted with her."

"Well, no matter, you saw her. Now, I will lay you fifty guineas that I produce a prettier girl."

"Done!" returned Clinton at once, "I take it, Doolittle; but what do you mean by beauty? Is it the face only?"

"Face and figure," replied the other.

"That is precisely what I wish, Doolittle. Well, I take you—it is now a wager, gentlemen, and no mistake about it."

"None, certainly," replied their companions—"the matter is clear and beyond cavil. Who is she, Doolittle?"

"I don't know her name," replied the captain, "but if you will all come to church on next Sunday, I will show her to you."

"Who is, or who are, to decide the wager?" asked a Captain Benson.

"Egad!" said Doolittle, "I have no hesitation in leaving the matter to himself. I know that Clinton is an honourable fellow, and will determine fairly."

"Never mind, Doolittle," replied Clinton, "I will not be outdone in generosity—I shall leave the decision of it to your own honour."

"All d—d nonsense," observed Benson; "leave it to Cairns, McGregor, and myself. Don't you know that each of you will back his own filly against all odds?"

"I don't like the expression, Benson," observed Clinton; "the girl I lay the wager on is as virtuous and well-conducted as she is beautiful."

"And mine," said Doolittle, "is as pious as a Puritan. I saw her at church to-day—sat in the same pew, right opposite to her—but if a single glance would secure my salvation, she would not give it."

"But how is the wager to be decided?" asked Cairns; "we must have an opportunity of seeing each of the parties before we can settle it."

"On next Sunday let us attend our religious duties, like good Christians," replied Doolittle, "and I promise to show you *my* party."

"And if you will all dine at my father's on Saturday week, and take beds there, I will show you *my* party, at our parish church."

This was as much as could be accomplished under the circumstances, and it was so arranged.

Maria's daily habits were beautiful and regular, as they always are in the virtuous and pure of heart. Nothing, indeed, could surpass her anxiety to improve herself in everything that she deemed necessary for her future welfare in life. She was possessed with an insatiable thirst for reading, to which she devoted a great portion of every Sunday. In fact it was astonishing how rapidly she improved in everything on which she bestowed her attention. She wrote both a good hand and a good style, and was capable of keeping Miss Travers's accounts in a clear and satisfactory manner. Her language, too, gradually improved in purity and force, and might not have disgraced the lips of many women who had received a good education. Every spare hour was set aside for the acquisition of something which she felt an advantage to know or to possess; and in this way she went on, day after day, adding one im-

provement to another, until she became, in general information, as well as in the knowledge of her particular business, actually without a rival in the establishment.

It was about two o'clock on the Tuesday after Doolittle had seen her in church, that a female came to the residence of Miss Travers, and having asked if a young woman named Brindsley lived there, was answered in the affirmative by Becky, the servant. Miss Bennet was passing into the parlour at the time, and saw the woman standing outside with a letter in her hand.

"It's a letter, Miss," said she to Miss Bennet, "for Miss Brindsley."

"You had better bring Miss Brindsley down herself," said that lady; "perhaps she may wish to see the messenger."

"Haith and you're right, Miss; maybe she would, sure enough."

Becky then went up stairs to bring Maria down, when Miss Bennet, availing herself of the opportunity, asked the messenger if she knew from whom the letter came.

"From a gentleman," replied the woman.

"Oh!" she replied, "I'm not surprised at that, for Miss Brindsley has a good many gentlemen acquaintances; but who is he in particular?"

"Why, Captain Doolittle, of the —th."

"Oh! I know; but he's no favourite with her, so if you wish her to read it, make off the moment you give it to her. Had it been from Lieutenant Clinton it would be well received—and you may say so."

She then withdrew into the parlour, and Maria almost immediately made her appearance in the hall.

"Here's a letter for you, Miss," said the woman, having added the "*Miss*" in consequence of Maria's beauty and elegance of deportment. Maria took the letter, looked at the address, and turned to the woman to inquire from whom it came. The latter was then proceeding out of the entrance gate, but turned round and said, "It's from Captain Doolittle, Miss—he's in love wth you," and immediately disappeared. Maria was about to fling the letter after her, and would have done so at once, but from an apprehension that Miss Bennet, whom she saw in the parlour, might take it up, and probably make some use of it to her disadvantage. She accordingly brought it upstairs to her own sleeping-room, when, after having looked once more at the superscription, she got pen and ink, and wrote upon it the words, "*Unopened, and rejected with indignation and scorn.*"

At this moment she was summoned by Miss Travers to make out an account for one of her customers, and hastily placing the letter on the chimney-piece, she left the room. The moment she went, Betty McClean came out of a small closet which was boarded off the room, and in which she herself always slept, and being struck with something like curiosity at the indignant expression of offence which flashed over Maria's countenance, on reading the superscription, she stepped out and looked over the back of the letter. On reading the words which Maria had written on it, she said: "Haith,

there's something queer in this letter, if one could only know it. Why the de'il didn't she open it, any way? Sure there could be no harm in that; but maybe she wull, after all."

A light foot was now heard coming up the stairs, and in order to cover herself from all suspicion of having even looked at or examined the appearance of it, she retired to the closet, which communicated with the room by a door, the upper half of which was glass, and behind which hung a piece of coarse green gauze, with a long slit or rent in the middle of it. She naturally expected that Maria would have returned, but to her surprise, the person who entered the room was Miss Bennet, as she could perceive through the rent. This lady looked around the room with a great deal of caution, then approached the chimney-piece, seized the letter, looked at it for a moment, hastily broke it open, and read it from beginning to end. A smile of baleful triumph then settled upon her face, and after putting her very white and beautiful hand to her forehead, as if to reflect upon the circumstance, she hurriedly thrust the letter into her bosom, and stole out of the room on tiptoe. Betty marked all this closely, and as the secret-
ing of this communication was a dishonest and treacherous act, she resolved to allow the consequences of it to proceed, until some crisis requiring her testimony might arrive, if any such crisis ever *should* arrive, as she thought was not improbable.

Maria, between one thing and another, had been engaged with Miss Travers for upwards of an hour, when, having returned to her own room, in order to determine whether she should burn the letter or return it to the writer with the strong expression of her indignation and scorn stamped upon it, she discovered, to her astonishment, that it had been either accidentally removed or stolen. Now, we must say for Maria, that she was not naturally suspicious, because no candid and artless individual, whether man or woman, ever is. It is only those who have been corrupted by the worst experience of life who are so, and who measure the motives and actions of others by their own. Still it was impossible that the letter could have gone without hands; but who could have been the thief, or what the object could have been in purloining an unopened letter, was the question. She determined, however, to make inquiry, and if possible to recover it, in order that she might cast it into the flames before their eyes, having first stated to them the individual from whom the messenger said it had come. With this object in view, she returned to the work-room, and inquired if any of them had seen or removed a letter which had been directed to her, and which she had placed on her chimney-piece only about an hour and a half ago.

"I am confident," said she, "of having left it there with my own hands, and now it is not to be found—it has been removed; but if any of you have taken it away as a practical joke, I will forgive you, provided you restore it to me, in order that I may act upon the occasion as I ought."

The poor girls stared at her with astonishment, and

none of them with a more complete assumption of that feeling than Miss Bennet.

"When did you receive the letter, Miss Brindsley?" inquired that lady.

"About two hours ago. I left it on the chimney-piece, having been called away by Miss Travers, and it is gone."

"This is discreditable to the establishment," said Miss Travers; "the letter must be found. You are sure you left it on the chimney-piece, Miss Brindsley?"

"As sure as I am of my life," she replied; "some one in the house has taken it. There can be no doubt of that."

"Well," said Betty McClean, "de'il a doubt there can be of that. Let us be all searched, and here am I willing to begin with it."

"Be it so," replied Miss Bennet; "although it is not a generous proposal, Betty, yet it is a fair one. I am also willing to be searched, although I never thought it would come to that with me."

"No!" replied the generous Maria, "I will have no search. I would not insult my friendly companions by such a course. The letter, I have reason to think, is one not at all worth any notice. It can be of no use to any body, and of no injury to me. All I can say is, that I have never opened it; and what is more, that I did not intend to do so."

"If I thought there was any person in my establishment," said Miss Travers, "capable of being guilty of such an act, they should remain but a very short time in it. I know what it is myself to receive letters, and I know what I must have felt if any one of those letters had happened to be purloined or opened; why it might have killed me, and I only wonder Miss Brindsley bears it with so much patience."

"Miss Brindsley and I have not, I regret to say, been on such terms as we ought to have," observed Miss Bennet, in a tone of feeling that indicated a very generous spirit; "but I must admit that her conduct under the loss of this letter, and her unwillingness to have any person searched in consequence, considering how much the letter, if known, might affect her, is highly creditable to her."

"You are quite mistaken," replied Maria, "if you think the letter could injure me in the slightest degree; unless, indeed, it fell into the hands of an enemy—nor probably even then; but as I know nothing, nor care anything about its contents, I beg we may drop the subject altogether. I don't think it is worth all the talk we have had about it."

Betty McClean sat as mute as a milestone, looking from one to another as if she knew not which was the thief; but when her eye rested on Miss Bennet, there was a very slight touch of something like amazement in it, mingled up with what might be termed a strong feeling of admiration. In the meantime the honest girl kept her thoughts to herself, and made a firm and resolute determination to look closely into the coming events, so far, at least, as they might be connected with Maria. She knew in her soul that the abstraction of the letter, as well as probably the letter itself, would be used for

the basest and most malignant purposes against the innocent girl; but as she had the clue to Miss Bennet's conduct, and as she understood her motives in the business, she resolved to countermine her in every one of her manoeuvres.

On the Saturday following, after a good deal of well-digested planning, Miss Bennet contrived to write the subjoined epistle to Captain Doolittle, in a close and successful imitation of Maria's hand, which she had frequently seen in accounts made up by the latter for Miss Travers:—

"SIR—I ought to feel ashamed while answering your too flattering and polite letter; but the truth is, that I feel tired of the wretched set that I am forced by most romantic circumstances to mingle with. I do not exactly know how to act—I am divided between two opinions. I know that Lieutenant Clinton has a sheep's eye after me—but *only* a sheep's eye. He is not the man for my *money*. I like a gentleman of liberal principles, and if I could be taken out of this miserable situation in which romantic circumstances have placed me, I would be true and faithful to any gentleman of honour, who would enable me to leave it without any future risk of poverty or neglect. I think I have a spirit above the mean life that I am obliged to stoop to. I have conducted the business of a most respectable house in Dublin for three years, and have had an opportunity of mixing in very polite society in the way of my profession, and could conduct myself in a very lady-like fashion. Do not blame me for going so regularly to church; for in a small town like this one must keep up a proper reputation. I can't have an opportunity of meeting you until to-morrow, when I shall be on the Newry road, about a mile out of town, as near seven o'clock in the evening as possible. We shall then talk over matters in such a way as I trust may be agreeable to both parties. I write this note always under the impression that you are a gentleman of honour and *liberality*.

"Yours affectionately,

"MARIA BRINDSLEY."

"P.S.—When you meet me, it might be as well if you kept your card in the palm of your hand, and turned it towards me, lest we might make a mistake. M. B."

This precious document the vindictive and unprincipled wretch sealed up and contrived to put into the post-office, but not without observation. Disguised in a hooded cloak, Betty McClean—her evil genius—watched her motions, and traced her at a distance to the post-office, at the hour of half-past eleven o'clock, A.M., a little before which time she affected to be taken ill, and pleaded the necessity of going to the apothecaries' to get a bottle of salts for her nerves. When she retired from the post-office, Betty went over to the window, and having tapped at it, said to the postmistress—"Am afeared, ma'am, that a put in the wrong letter a while ago. Will you look at it, if you please, and tell me who it's directed to?"

"How can I tell which letter you put in?" replied the postmistress.

"It's the last in," said Betty, "and am thinking you'll be apt to find it on the tap of the rest."

"The uppermost," answered the other—"this must be it, I suppose—"To Captain Doolittle, Armagh Barracks."

"Thank you, ma'am," returned Betty; "that's it, and aalls right. I can neither read nor write, and a wasn't sure that a didn't put in the wrong letter."

She arrived home somewhat sooner than Miss Bennet, who, in order to conceal her part in this most unprincipled intrigue, made it a point to go to the apothecaries', where she procured a few drops of smelling salts, as an apology for her journey out.

In the meantime, Sunday—a day connected with our narrative in a double sense—arrived, and Maria, as usual, prepared to go to church, accompanied once more by Miss Travers and Betty McClean, with whom, indeed, she generally went. They were in the habit of sitting always in the particular pew we have mentioned, and on this occasion they occupied it once more. The congregation were only beginning to assemble, and in order that they might secure a seat in the same pew, three officers, dressed in full uniform, made their appearance, and took their places right opposite them. Maria was neither disturbed nor discomposed, but sat with downcast eyes, apparently engaged in thought. In a few minutes Doolittle made his appearance, and joined them;—still, calm, and without the slightest indication of emotion, or any consciousness of the coming assignation. We do not say that she did not give each as they came in that natural glance of indifference which we bestow upon strangers, but that was the only notice she took of them. At length Clinton came to the pew, entered, and took his seat beside his friends. Never was there so marked, so legible, and so rapid a change, as his appearance occasioned in her countenance. A blush, instant and tumultuous, swept over her whole face, and as much of the neck as was visible. Nay more, her hands, as they held her prayer-book, visibly trembled, and her emotion was not only obvious to all, but it was perfectly distinct and clear to every one in the pew that he (Clinton) was the cause of her agitation. Even the very heavings of her bosom were apparent, nor could any effort on her part enable her to suppress them. After some time this tumult, whether of pleasure or pain, it is hard to say, perhaps it was of both, but be this as it may, it ceased, and was not renewed until after the conclusion of the service, when the officers rose to depart. Then a single glance, quick as thought, and again the whole countenance was overspread with blushes. On her way home, she took Miss Travers's arm, who perceived that she trembled violently. In fact, she was unable to sustain her part in the conversation, as was evident from the fact of her often giving wrong answers when she did speak, and sometimes she was absent and silent, and returned no answers at all. Both Miss Travers and Betty drew their own conclusions from what they witnessed, and in such a way as

unquestionably to connect Maria's agitation with some mysterious influence which Clinton must have had the power of exercising over her.

When our military friends left church, Clinton addressed them as follows:

"Gentlemen," said he, "I apprehend that this wager must be drawn. Pray, Doolittle, is the youngest of those three respectable-looking females, the person on whom you have made the bet?"

"Certainly Clinton; and I will not withdraw it."

"Oh, but you must, my dear fellow, when you learn that she is the very individual on whom I also laid my wager. We have both, without knowing it, wagered upon the same person. It seems she is now in Armagh, a fact of which I was not aware until this day."

"In that case," replied Doolittle, "the wager is off; but I care not for that. Where are you going, Clinton?"

"Faith, I will follow her home, until I see where she lives," he replied.

"Save yourself the trouble, my dear fellow; she's engaged."

"Engaged! What do you mean? To whom is she engaged?"

"To a spruce, rather handsome youth—somewhat the worse of the wear though—by name Jeremy Doolittle."

"Impossible," replied the other. "I will not, and I do not believe it."

"Well, perhaps you are right; but in the meantime, will you lay another wager, to the same amount, that she is not?"

"What, another fifty? be it so; but in addition to that, I would lay my life that you are mistaken."

"Well, but is it a wager?"

"It is, I said so; but I now leave you. Yonder she goes, and I must keep her in view, without seeming to follow her."

"Will you be at home in an hour?" asked Doolittle.

"Yes, in half an hour. Why do you ask?"

"Because I have a document to show, from under her fair hand, which will rayther astonish you. Bye-bye!"

Doolittle who was—as too many of his class are—an abandoned profligate, and who boasted of his successes as if they had been feats of honourable enterprise, could not conceal his triumph on the receipt of this diabolical epistle. Having taken a pen and obliterated the words containing the time and place of assignation, he went to Clinton's room, and in a voice of elated swagger, whilst he capered and danced about, addressed him as follows:

"Clinton, you owe me fifty pounds, which you may as well pay. Clinton, you're a goose—Clinton, you're a sheep, and will get well shorn some of those days; Clinton, you're late in the field—Clinton, you're a day after the fair. I have secured her: *eureka*, my boy, *eureka*—I have found the prize; she's mine."

"What the deuce are you at, Dooly? What maggot has bitten you now? Are you crazed? Only you don't drink in the morning, I should say you were at

the brandy bottle. What do you mean? And why do you flourish that letter about in such a fashion?"

"Wait, my good fellow—wait, I say, till you see it, and then you will fork out without hesitation."

"Where's the use of all this strutting and cackling about it," replied Clinton. "You may swagger as you like, but by —, I know I can't lose."

"It is not that, my boy—it is not that, I say, but this"—and he placed Miss Bennet's assignation in his hand as he spoke—"read, read, and propound."

Clinton took the flagitious document, and deliberately read it through; but when he came to Maria Brindsley, at the bottom, his face became deadly pale; for, poor fellow, humble as Maria was, she had been his first love. To describe what he felt, would be difficult, if not impossible. He started to his feet, with the open letter in his hand, and began to walk backwards and forwards through the room.

"Clinton, my dear fellow, don't faint," said his friend, with sarcastic triumph; "you are ill; it is a severe blow, I grant; shall I ring for a glass of water?"

"Dooly, be quiet, sir," replied Clinton, sternly, "let me think for a little. I am more interested in this than you can imagine. I am surprised—astonished. Good heavens! Are we to discard the very evidences of truth and modesty which the hand of nature, nay, of God himself, has impressed upon the countenances of some of his creatures?"

"Yes, go on; try metaphysics, they may relieve you," said Dooly, as they called him in barracks. "If, however, you take my advice, you will get a Bible, and become a good Christian; it's a clear case, that you will require strong spiritual support under this severe dispensation. The Bible then; or what do you think of the bottle. Come, I see it must be either the Bible or the bottle; but, if I were in your case, I know which I should prefer."

Clinton still walked to and fro, in a silence that indicated some tumultuous struggle within him. He looked from time to time at Doolittle—looked fiercely too—as if about to speak; again paced up and down, but spoke not for a considerable time.

"Dooly," said he at length, "this affair must go no further."

"Must it not? and why so, Clinton? Have you any particular interest in this girl?"

"A deep interest."

"Why so? Are you and she acquainted? Have you any prior claim? Let us, at least, understand each other; but remember, that whatever may be your explanation—perhaps it may be romantic, she talks about romance, faith!—remember, I say, that as the matter stands now, or may stand in future, *no surrender's* my motto. I nail it to the mast. I ask again, are you acquainted with this girl?"

"No; I never spoke to her?"

"Then what the devil do you mean, Clinton, by all this fudge? You don't know her, and you never spoke to her; then, what interest can you have in her, unless it be to secure her for yourself?"

"I tell you I have a deep interest in her; an interest which I can neither explain nor account for. I cannot stand by and see so beautiful and modest a girl deliberately ruined."

"Modest! did you read her letter? Egad, my boy, that's the production of a knowing one. See how ably she goes about making her bargain; but, to tell you the truth, I am myself devilishly surprised how a creature so young and innocent-looking should have got a knowledge of such diplomacy. Did you see how she blushed at the consciousness of my presence to-day?"

"I will not believe it," replied Clinton; "I cannot believe it. The thing is impossible."

"What is her name?"

"Brindsley—Maria Brindsley, certainly."

"Well, and is it not there in black and white?"

"I will read the letter again," replied Clinton; "but, in the meantime, I am utterly confounded."

He then reperused the letter, until he came to the following words: "*I have conducted the business of a most respectable house in Dublin for three years.*" "*Ha!*" he exclaimed; "great Heavens! I am right; the writer of this cannot be Maria Brindsley; she is not more than a few months from her mother's house, from which she never had been absent until her removal here."

"There is no difficulty in that, Clinton. Do you think that she who could write such a letter, would scruple at a pardonable fib to give herself *prestige*? Why, you are sillier than I ever thought you were, and have, as she hinted, a good deal of the sheep in you. I dare say she never saw Dublin in her life, and that the thing is a fib; but even so, I pardon it, and rather give her credit for her fancy than otherwise."

"Dooly," said his friend, "this letter never proceeded *directly* from herself; it must have been the consequence of evil communication, the result of some vile contamination, that has corrupted her principles, or that will do so, if she is not saved in time. I entreat you, then, to give up this base and ungenerous pursuit."

"Base! I beg you to understand, Clinton, that I will not have the term *base* applied to me. You will please to retract it."

"To ruin the only child of an humble but pious and respectable widow; to leave her hearth desolate, and to drive the poisoned shaft of affliction, sharpened by disgrace and infamy, into her heart; to do this wilfully and deliberately, in order to gratify a foul and licentious passion, is base, and I will *not* retract it, unless you retract your intention of destroying this ill-advised and unhappy girl."

"Do you mean to fight for this girl?"

"No, not in the present stage of the question. Do you?"

"No, not in the present stage of the question: but, I must confess, it is rather queer to hear Satan rebuking sin."

"I have had my failings like other men, Doolittle, but to carry destruction and shame under the roof of a virtuous family, is what I have never done nor contemplated, and what, I trust, I never shall do. All I can say is, that this letter appears to me to be a mystery."

I cannot comprehend it. I cannot reconcile it to the conduct of a girl who bore a most amiable, pure, and unspotted character in her native place. Such a girl could never precipitate herself at once, I may say, into the gulf of vice and infamy, as the writer of this letter proposes to do."

"It's quite evident, Clinton, that she requires but little temptation to do so," replied his brother officer.

"Well Dooly, for the present I suspend my judgment, and I entreat, nay, I implore you, to suspend your purpose, or rather to abandon it altogether. Believe me, you will feel the better of it on your death-bed."

"Now, I really never poke my nose into your affairs, Clinton, and I beg that you will not interfere in mine. When you wish to break a lance as a gallant knight, let the lady of your love at least be worthy of it. And now about the bet."

"I regret I made any such bet, Dooly; but as it is made, I shall see it out with more certainty. I deny that you have won it. Good heavens! if that girl were only what I supposed her to be, I would fling five times the amount of it to you, or to the dogs. Leave me, Dooly, I must go out again. I have business to attend to."

Dooly left him, and on his way to his own room, exclaimed, or rather thought:

"This fellow is in love with her, I can see that, and only wishes to get me out of his way, that's his dodge, but I shall disappoint him. What devilish fine lectures on moral virtue he can read me. I wonder would he practise them himself. Still, I am considerably astonished at this affair. On Sunday last at church I cursed her in my heart for not looking at me; and to-day again I could not get a glance; but that was shame on her part. Then there appeared to be such sincerity, and an earnestness in her devotions. Pshaw! hypocrisy; and that is easily assumed; but where could she have gotten it so early? Why, born with her—for such is the fact in too many instances, when vice does not proceed from either experience or example, but from instinct—and what, after all, does it come to? If I don't, another will."

(TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.)

TWO CHINESE NOVELS.

BY JULIA KAVANAGH.

WE knew China from our childhood; fire-screens, cabinets, hideous little ivory gods, mandarins, ay, even the willow plate pattern have done that work for us; but this distorted knowledge is almost worse than ignorance. This China with its caricature figures, extravagant landscape, a marvellously delicate handicraft, is not exactly the same that books of travels tell us of, still less that which we behold when we by chance open one of the few translations which exist of the many thousand Chinese novels. Judging the many by the few, the Chinese novels are wonderfully like our own. This is disappointing, but easily accounted for. The Chinese are an intellectual, commercial and civilized people, and

like all civilized nations, they are composed, sceptical and dull. Utterly remote from the wild oriental and splendid imagery of the Arabian Nights are their tales; they are, indeed, wonderfully like some of our fashionable stories; the same want of all lively incident, the same predominance of conversation over action, and the same importance given to the formal and external part of life, mark them both.

We owe to a distinguished French scholar several translations of these Chinese tales. We will give some account of two: one a tale of the intellect, the other a tale of the heart; and through both we shall acquire a more distinct view of Chinese feelings and manners than any traveller could furnish us with, for in their pages we shall see what travellers rarely have the opportunity of knowing—woman. In the first her intellect is raised to a height that suggests the inquiry—since according to M. Stanislaus Julien, Chinese novelists carefully conceal their names—is the work so much to the honour of the female sex written by a woman? In the second, the heroine acts the most prominent part: she is intelligent and firm, and by knowing how to keep a secret, she secures her dignity and happiness. Apart from this source of interest we get glimpses of various customs; yet fewer than we are prepared for. The Chinese are certainly more like ourselves than we have been pleased to think; they are more formal, more ceremonious than we are; they think more of book learning than we do, and no wonder, since it seems to be the road to success and power; but it requires some attention to say in what important questions—religion apart—they differ from us, as tested by the representations of life contained in their works of fiction.

The only very striking difference is in the position of woman. Chinese ladies do not go out much, and do not mix in the society of men. But theirs would seem to be a retired, not a captive life. This retirement certainly excludes no faith in the intellectual culture of woman. Whether we take the heroines of "The Two Young Girls of Letters," as idealized portraits of what is, or as aspirations towards what can be, it would appear that the Chinese do not consider women incapable of acquiring knowledge or of excelling in composition, and their faith in, and desire for such a result, is one of the most subtle proofs of their intellectual refinement. It is only when they stand very high themselves that men are inclined to let women approach them.

Less apparent, but very peculiar is the fashion according to which a Chinese novelist deals with love, as compared to the European author. In our good moral novel love is graceful, calm, wise; ruled by reason and generally fortunate; in our novel of real life, it takes every aspect from stormy to serene: it is essentially a passion: in our romance it is ecstatic and unconquerable; this is the love which is born of a look and lasts till death. Assuming that the Chinese novels we know are fair tests of the rest, we must say that Chinese love knows no such variety. It is conventionally painted as a feeling believed in, though rarely witnessed, for all the lovers love alike, for the same reasons and for the same

end. They are attracted by beauty and merit in the same degree, and tend to one purpose—marriage. They do not marry so much because they love, as they love because they must marry. The feeling is made subservient to the great social institution, which gives man a home, and the state subjects. Here and there we get flashes of passion, but the Chinese novelist does not turn the accidental fever of love into its habitual condition. There may be coldness in this view, but there is also sense and dignity.

The horror and dismay in which China holds a want of decorum, is the next feature with which we are struck. We like politeness and good manners, but we certainly have not that rigid love of form which seems to have enchained the Chinese mind, to the great detriment of genius, and which has taken in some degree the place of honour; forms can be learned by heart, but honour is a matter of inspiration. The characters of these Chinese tales often behave admirably; they shew charity, kindness and consideration, but they are not heroic, still less are they ardent. We think that the reader who will take the trouble of looking over the following account of two Chinese novels, will agree with us; that the good characters in them answer to an unfortunate English word—respectable!

"Under an illustrious and flourishing dynasty of the past, the son of Heaven followed the right path, the empire was in a state of profound peace, the civil and military officers were eminent for virtue and truth, and the people were happy."

Thus begins the story of "The Two Young Girls of Letters." The Son of Heaven however, is soon disturbed from his repose. The aspect of the stars has revealed to a magistrate that "the garden of literature" is in a most flourishing condition, under his majesty's happy reign, yet strange to say, the banquet which in his joy the emperor offers to the poets and learned men of his empire, proves the sterility of their invention.

The feast is splendid; the sky is pure and bright, the air is calm; lovely flowers are in bloom, the loriots sing sweetly as they skim along the earth, the tables are covered with the daintiest Chinese meats, real and fabulous: dragon livers, phoenix marrow, young leopards, monkey lips etc., the imperial music is playing the admired melodies of "the six flowers" and "the seven stems;" the embroidered robes and jewelled caps of the guests are sparkling in the sun; to crown all, the emperor has kindly ordered the whole of them to get intoxicated, when two mischievous white swallows come down from the sky, and with motions as rapid and measured as those of a skilful dancing-girl, they gracefully hover before the imperial eyes.

The Son of Heaven is delighted with their beauty, and wants to know how many poems have been written on white swallows; two are recited to him, but when he asks for a third, the whole garden of literature sitting before him cannot produce it; the difficulty of the achievement is too great. At length seeing his majesty's disappointment, the minister Chên-hièn-jin steps

forth and humbly offers him a poem written on white swallows, by his young daughter, Chên-Tai.

The emperor is delighted with the beauty of Chên-Tai's verses, and declares that she must be framed of the purest essence of mountains and rivers. This prodigy—she is only ten—Chinese young ladies are no doubt precocious—is not merely an accomplished poetess, she is also a lovely girl, beautiful as pearls, bright as the flowers of Tehi and Lân, white as snow and pure as the breeze. Grave and mild, she takes no pleasure in embroidered garments, pearls and blue feathers. Every day attired in a white robe, she sits in a lofty pavilion, and puts all her delight in reading or composing verses, at the same time burning perfumes, and drinking delicious tea. She is thus engaged on the day of the banquet; with scanty faith in the garden of literature at the palace, she reflects on the scarcity of true talent, and conscious of her own gifts she exclaims:

"Is it not a pity that Chên-Tai, because she is a young girl, is buried in the depths of the female apartment. If I were but a young man, and that I had found a prince favourable to letters, who knows if with my little pencil, I too could not display the inspiration of a man of talent."

Her father breaks on this melancholy mood with a recital of what has happened, and with the intimation that she is to appear at the palace.

The interview takes place. Chên-Tai fulfils all the rites and ceremonies with so much propriety, behaves with such decorum, and on his majesty's wish, composes poetry for him with such charming rapidity, that he loads her with presents and distinctions. Besides pencils, brushes, writing paper ornamented with dragons, ink, golden flowers, gold, silver and pearls; the Son of Heaven bestows on her the right of measuring all the talents of the empire, gives her a sceptre of gold, which authorizes her to punish with death any man so audacious as to insult her, and finally, he writes on a sheet of paper the four words: Hong-Wen-Tsai-Niu, "a girl of talent eminent in literature," and dismisses her with this diploma.

By thus honouring the genius of a young girl, the Son of Heaven gives us the key to the whole story, the worship of intellect. There is little else in it; love itself is subordinate to that master passion. Chên-Tai, and her adopted sister, Ling-Kiang-Sioné, can love none save their equals in poetry and prose, and their two admirers Gèn-pé-hân and P'ing-jon-heng love them especially because the charms of their mind surpass those of their person. Hence a strange coldness, spite many graceful details and some pretty incidents. Of religion we hear nothing, and little of moral goodness; and though the heroes and heroines are honourable, we feel it is especially because they are intellectual; in short, mind acts in the whole story, one of the ten great novels of the Chinese, the part which chivalrous honour acted in the romances of the middle ages.

Even as genius is noble, though somewhat insolent, so mediocrity is mean, envious and treacherous. Chên-Tai's elevation and fame excite great jealousy, a result natural in every country, and conspiracies are set on

foot to ruin her. She is put to trials of merit which only redound to her honour. She competes with the most eminent poets and prose writers, and beats them all, and it is curious to see that the tests of her excellence are rapidity of composition, and swiftness in writing. Pen-Chi-Thong, one of her antagonists, has not time to discern the rhymes on which he is to compose, when Chàn-Tai seizing her brush, and without taking time to think, equals by her rapid writing "the impetuosity of wind and rain, the flight of dragons, and the agility of serpents." Against gifts so rare none of her opponents can contend. Accomplished as is Chàn-Tai, she finds her equal in a young girl of inferior birth, but like her of cultivated mind and a proficient in poetical composition. A rich farmer named Ling-Sin, after having three sons only fit to work in the fields, had a daughter born to him in his old age; she was not merely beautiful as jadestone and flowers, with eye-brows like the outline of distant mountains, and a skin like snow; she was also endowed with marvellous intelligence, which Ling-Sin caused to be carefully cultivated. But when she had reached her twelfth year, the thoughtful father began to wonder where he could find a fitting husband for so beautiful and accomplished a maiden; Ling-Kiang-Sioné speaks her mind with a degree of independence we hardly expect from Chinese young ladies.

"I do not care about his station [she says], let him be of the town or of the country, I care not. All I ask is, that my future husband may have talent and instruction, and can contend with me in verse and prose. If he conquers me I shall marry him; but if he is vanquished, even though he were a licentiate or a doctor, an ally or even a near relative of the emperor's, he need not think of me."

A literary man named Song-sin, is famous in the province; Ling-sin would like him for a son-in-law, but how make the great man come to compete with Ling-Kiang-Sioné! "Make him come," she says "nothing is so easy; he need not even be invited; a piece of paper three inches wide will be sufficient."

At once she indites a poetical challenge, and tells her father to paste it up near Song-sin's dwelling. Song-sin is only an impostor, he has been vanquished by Chàn-Tai, and he is conquered by Ling-Kiang-Sioné. His first defeat had caused him to be bastinadoed, and exiled, and untaught by that lesson, he attempts to be revenged on the daughter of Ling-sin. The father of Chàn-Tai is anxious to procure his daughter a female secretary. Availing himself of the minister's name and power, Song-sin causes Ling-Kiang-Sioné to be seized, bought, and taken away from her home. The young girl is not dismayed, but relying on her genius and good fortune, considers the event most propitious, and undertakes the journey to the capital in high spirits. Fame, success, an accomplished lover are in her dreams; she is anxious to measure her strength with Chàn-Tai, and scorns the mere thought of being treated like a slave. A boat bears her down the river; attracted by the sight of an ancient temple hidden among the trees, she asks to land. The master of the boat objects; the sun is setting, the wind is good, he begs she will give up her project,

"And why should I give it up?" she asks, insisting all the more, and she has her way.

It is one of the habits of all the characters in this story, never to move without the four treasures of writing in plain speech, pen and ink, etc., and being thus provided, never to miss an opportunity of scribbling verses on the walls of gardens, buildings, etc. Ling-Kiang-Sioné writes a quatrain on the wall of the temple, and signs it. The verses are seen and admired by an accomplished youth, P'ing-jon-heng, who writing four lines on the same rhymes, and also signing them, watches to see the young lady come out. She has just time to see his composition and catch a glimpse of his person, which is graceful and prepossessing, when she is hurried away to the boat; and overpowered with admiration on seeing this gifted and beautiful girl, with flowing hair, delicate eye-brows, and light and elegant carriage, P'ing-jon-heng unfortunately faints, so that when he recovers his senses, the lovely vision has vanished, and motionless as a stone statue, he sees the boat sailing away.

It is always to chance that Chinese lovers owe such opportunities, and we must not be surprised at the ravages they produce in Chinese hearts. The thoughts which follow on the fainting fit, are of so disheartening a nature, that a burning fever is the consequence. When P'ing-jon-heng recovers, all chance of following and discovering the beautiful stranger is gone. Ling-Kiang-Sioné, who is also smitten, but in a more moderate degree, proceeds on her journey, asserts her dignity with Chàn-Tai's father, and becomes the adopted sister of Chàn-Tai. The admiration with which the two beautiful girls gaze on each other when they meet first, the generous recognition they show of each other's talent, and the tender friendship which binds them through all that would divide others, is the most graceful and delicate feature in the whole story.

A friendship as exalted and as suddenly formed unites P'ing-jon-heng and Yèn-pê-hân, and the audacity of the barefaced Song-sin in assuming as his own the poems of Chàn-Tai, causes the two young men to become acquainted with Chàn-Tai's fame. Yèn-pê-hân at once falls in love with that invisible poetess, and P'ing-jon-heng urges him to seek her as he will seek the beautiful girl he saw in the temple. "Now that we know their names," he says, "should we go up to heaven or descend into the abysses of the earth, we can look for their traces."

His friend is no less ardent, and they set forth on their journey, travelling like poor students, and under feigned names, but with hopes of renown and love leading them on. The ruins of a country house which had once belonged to a celebrated poet, are on their way. They visit them and are struck with the vicissitudes inherent to all mortal things.

"Though the foundation still existed, the house itself was entirely ruined. In the vicinity nothing was to be seen but the solitary mountain, which as it sank or rose revealed or hid the land around: both back and front grew a few sickly willows. The two poets draw near, and feel melancholy on thinking of the ancient splendour now so sadly

eclipsed, of this building. They sent a servant to purchase a jar of wine in the village, and sitting down each on a block of stone, they began to drink. Yèn-pé-hân said: 'I think that Eon-yang-sieon, who had his house built here, was one of the most eminent men of letters of the Song dynasty. Pretty singing girls poured out his drink; how happy he must have been then! where are the singing girls now? Cold-looking ruins alone remain. Merit and fame, riches and honour, pass in a moment, like the clouds which the wind bears away; what advantage can they procure us?'

'Though riches and honours do not last long,' answered Ping-jon-heng, 'a splendid fame remains upon earth, even though Eon-yang-sieon is no more, the memory of the joys poetry and wine gave him in this house is not lost. Look at that solitary mountain, and those withered willows. Though the spot be desolate and sad, a secret charm detains one here. We need not so be moved and bound by the feeling poems of Yong-chon.'

'As they were thus discoursing, they suddenly saw two swallows, who hovered here and there twittering. One might have thought they were chatting together and listening. On seeing them the two friends could not control their poetic inspirations. They told a servant to bring them ink and pencil, and to clean the surface of a ruined wall; then Yen-pé-hân wrote first the following verses:

"I have heard that when this house was first built,
The pleasures of poetry and wine were enjoyed here with
delight.

All this has long been vanished.

The solitary mountain alone is left.

Who has seen this dwelling, who has admired it?

Ask, I pray, the cold swallows of Ping-chân.'

"Composed by Tchao-tsung—his assumed name—of Yun-Kiên."

Yèn-pé-hân having written, Ping-jon-heng took the brush, and in his turn wrote verses on the same rhymes:

"The spring is gone and the peony has lost its beauty;

When autumn is felt the willow loses its silken threads.

Every thing in this world is subject to change;

The splendour of fame alone changes not.

Beware, beware, to complain.

Here are still the swallows of Ping-chân."

He too signs his verses with the assumed name of Tsien-hong, and this change of name helps to perplex the story. The two travellers are already famous, and whilst they take a year to complete their journey—for theirs is an ideal passion, and in no hurry—the Son of Heaven declares that one of them shall marry Chàn-Tai, whose literary accomplishments frighten away other suitors, and whom he kindly authorizes to choose which of the two she likes best. They know nothing about it, but poor Ling-Kiang-Sioné thinking herself forgotten by Ping-jon-heng, grows jealous and sad. She thinks of him from morning till night, and tea and rice are indifferent to her.

"Formerly she composed with Chàn-Tai beneath the trees in blossom, or wrote verses by moonlight on the same rhymes. It was a delightful task. But now even though the day was fair and the spot beautiful, she remained unmoved and cold. If she compelled herself to speak of the beauties of nature, she showed no pleasure. Chàn-Tai often spoke words of comfort to her, but though her lips assented, her heart was troubled with a sort of delirium, and every day languishing and weary, she sighed for sleep."

Yet there seems no great fear of the calamity she apprehends. The two youths, thanks to their assumed

names, are not to be found, and it is soon Chàn-Tai's turn to sicken.

"A great happiness has befallen me to-day," she says to her friends, "I too have seen a youth of talent."

"How did you meet him?" asks Ling-Kiang-Sioné.

"Having gone to visit my father, I ascended the pavilion of early spring to look at the plum trees in bloom. Suddenly as I opened the window, I saw below a youth standing near the plum trees in bloom. His features were handsome, noble and beautiful. When he saw me, he cast impassioned looks towards me; but he was seen by some servant girls, who drove him from the garden."

The handsome youth is Yèn-pé-hân; verses on the garden wall reveal his love and his genius, but unfortunately do not tell his name; hence Chàn-Tai's grief and sorrow. He too is heart-sick; unconscious that the lovely girl he has seen is his ideal love. He forgets the poetess whom he has come to seek for the beautiful face whose charms are beyond all poetry, and thus relates his adventure to his friend:

"The country was lovely, I walked at random, and went very far without perceiving it. Having stopped an instant to rest, I suddenly saw a blooming garden of strange beauty. I entered to give it a look, and having reached the foot of an elegant pavilion, I saw plum trees in full blossom. As I was admiring them a window opened noisily, and I saw a young girl. Her eyebrows were so delicate, her eyes so bright, her complexion so blooming, and her features so lovely, that it would be impossible to paint her. I do not think the beautiful Si-Chi, named Mao-tsiang, could surpass her. When this young girl saw me, she did not draw back much; but as I wanted to save my eyes with her aspect, two servant girls angrily drove me from the garden.....but at least I have seen a beautiful girl far beyond any I had beheld, and who must far surpass the one with whom you are enamoured."

Ping-jon-heng's answer upholds a theory which does infinite credit to that young gentleman's mature judgment.

"When a woman has delicate eyebrows and bright eyes she may no doubt be called beautiful; but if she has no talent to produce marvellous ideas, she can at the utmost be compared to a flower, to a willow, to a lariat, to a swallow, to a pearl, or to jadestone. These things, though they please men, can do so but for a time. The flower fades, the willow-tree withers, the lariat changes, the swallow grows old, the pearl turns yellow, and the jadestone flies to pieces, where then is the beauty?"

All this, though wise and true, is trite enough; but Ping-jon-heng goes much farther. Ling-Kiang-Sioné being a poetess, he proclaims her intellectual beauty in terms which, though fervent, waken no dissent in the bosom of his friend. Yèn-pé-hân agrees with him: intellect is beauty; then reversing the proposition, he comfortably proves that beauty is intellect.

"The young girl whom I saw [he declares], had noble features and a blooming complexion. If her talent were not first-rate, how could she be so fascinating? Scarcely did I see her when my heart was subdued and my soul grew faint. Imagine the vapours and clouds which float between heaven and earth, and baffle all description. In my opinion so beautiful a girl must possess amazing talent."

Yèn-pé-hân is soon convinced of this fact, by finding some beautiful verses which Chàn-Tai has written on

the wall where he had left his, and by which she evidently gives him reason to hope that he has moved her heart. But as she has prudently not put her name to the love-letter, as decorum prevents him from learning who she is, and as his own wits do not help him to the discovery, some strange perplexities, a good deal in the style of the old comedy, follow. The two students still keeping their assumed names, direct a poetic but impertinent challenge to Chàn-Tai; she is charmed with the beauty of their verses, but piqued at their audacity. A plot is concerted between her and her friend, and it only proves too successful.

The competition between the two friends and Chàn-Tai is carried on at her father's house, and to ensure fair play the two young men are separated. Yèn-pé-hân crosses a beautiful garden and reaches an elegant kiosk.

"He saw a pavilion painted in lively colours; a multitude of birds chirruped gaily; the sculptured balustrades were covered with bright flowers; nothing could be more elegant or rich. Examining the interior of the kiosk, he saw placed, east and west, two writing-tables covered with writing materials symmetrically arranged. Yèn-pé-hân said to himself: 'I have learned that she possesses a pavilion of the jade-stone, where, by order of the emperor, she measures literary talent. Why have I not been taken there instead of being brought here? I imagine,' he continued, 'that she wishes to examine us separately, and that I have been led here because it would not be convenient to let us meet in the pavilion.' He was still engaged in these thoughts when he saw approaching four or five servant women, who surrounded a young girl attired in blue. On seeing her at a distance, Yèn-pé-hân thought he beheld a goddess. He was tempted to take her for a noble lady, but she was attired like a servant, and for a servant he would have taken her, had he not noticed in her extraordinary grace and beauty. Before his surprise and doubts were dispelled she arrived near him. Yèn-pé-hân precipitately left his seat, and presented his respects to her. After a careless greeting, the young girl in blue went and sat at the east, opposite to Yèn-pé-hân, who had placed himself at the west. Not knowing who she was he did not dare to question her lightly, and holding down his head, looked at her by stealth. The young girl spoke first:

"'Mr. Tchao,' she said, 'you must not be amazed or in doubt; I am not Miss Chàn; you see in me the servant girl whom she uses as secretary; I am by her express command to take lessons from you.'

To take lessons from a person, apparently means, in this case, to compete with that person. Yèn-pé-hân politely asks why Miss Chàn did not come herself, and compelled the lovely secretary to weary her feet "beautiful as jade-stone." The answer of the young girl in blue is exquisitely impertinent.

"Before yesterday [she says] two gentlemen of eminent rank came to see Miss Chàn to try her talent. She did all she could to satisfy them, but as they did not understand one word she said, all her eloquence was wasted. You do her much honour to-day in condescending to visit her, and the loftiness of your talent renders you very different indeed from those gentlemen. But Miss Chàn is extremely careful not to be so caught again, besides she is undergoing medical treatment in the pavilion of the jade-stone, and can bear neither trouble nor fatigue; therefore she has sent me to take lessons from you. If you have real talent, and that I am vanquished by the very sound of your voice, we will sweep your path for you, and after having burned perfumes,

take you to the pavilion, that it may be decided to-day who holds the sceptre of letters; but if yours is only an ordinary talent, I advise you to avoid a world of unpleasantness."

Great is Yèn-pé-hân's wrath on hearing this speech. How dare the insolent little thing send him a servant-girl? If he withdraws he acknowledges himself vanquished, and if he stays to compete with the girl in blue, does he not forfeit his dignity? A stolen look at his antagonist rather mollifies him. She is exquisitely lovely, quite as beautiful as the young girl he saw looking out from the lofty pavilion. "What matter that she is a servant-girl," thinks Yèn-pé-hân; "beautiful as she is, I shall be happy to compose with her. Besides she must know very little; I shall vanquish her with one piece of poetry, and then I can see Miss Chàn."

The contest begins; it is a sharp battle. Yèn-pé-hân's first verses deride the audacity of young girls whose only merit consists in their painted eyebrows, and who yet think to go down to posterity; but his last are an acknowledgment of defeat. If he can equal, he cannot vanquish the girl in blue, why then should he trouble her mistress? On hearing this the young servant rises and leaves him in a sort of despair.

"Since heaven and earth have given beautiful women all the pure essence of mountains and rivers, asks Yèn-pé-hân, why are men born?"

P'ing-jon-heng's defeat is no less decisive. He is taken to a pavilion where a young girl beautiful as a blooming bough sits writing surrounded with servant women: he bows deeply, announces himself under his feigned name of Tsiên-heng, and makes a speech.

"'Madam, your glorious name has long reached my ears like spring thunder. To-day I have the happiness of appearing before you; I should like to display my pen-talent, and take lessons from you.' And as he spoke he still bowed with his head bent.

"The young girl burst out laughing.

"'Mr. Tsiên,' she said, 'keep your dignity; I am not Miss Chàn.'

"On hearing her say she was not Miss Chàn, P'ing-jon-heng suddenly looked up and saw that this young girl was beautiful as a flower, and supple as a willow-tree. She looked like a goddess. Then he thought to himself: being so lovely, how is she not Miss Chàn? yet she is attired in blue like a servant-girl. Then questioning her he asked: 'If you are not Miss Chàn, who are you?'

"The young girl's bright lips parted and displayed teeth as white as jade-stone. 'Sir,' she said, in a clear and graceful voice, 'I am not Miss Chàn, but her secretary.'

"Then why does she take airs and laugh at him? indignantly asks P'ing-jon-heng.

"And why by taking her for her mistress has he made himself foolish? she replies.

"Well, let us say no more about it,' frantically rejoins P'ing-jon-heng; 'but pray why does not Miss Chàn appear?'

"I would have you know, sir,' answers the young girl in blue, 'that though Miss Chàn is only a young girl, she knows how to keep her dignity. Even when the emperor summons her three times to court, she is satisfied with going once. If princes, lords, and ministers call and ask to see her, they must return four or five times before they are admitted. Then how can a newcomer like you be so impatient and expect to see her? It is only through her goodness that she has sent me to receive you.'

Though startled at a dignity so austere, P'ing-jon-heng declines competing with the pretty secretary, and asks to see her mistress.

"Miss Chên," answers the young girl, "has three classes of secretaries, altogether twelve servant girls, who have different ranks. I belong to the last class. If I cannot vanquish you in this competition, one of the second class will come; if she cannot conquer you she will be replaced by one of the first class; if this one does not prevail over you, you will be asked to go up to the *pavilion of the jade stone*, and to appear before Miss Chên. It is too early to see her yet."

P'ing-jon-heng, piqued at the classification, and confident of victory, sits down and competes with his adversary. He soon acknowledges himself vanquished, and bitterly exclaims, that since such is the talent of women, men may now die with shame. Satisfied with this specimen of the third class, he declines seeing Miss Chên, and humbly adds, "when I have studied ten years more, I shall come and take lessons from her."

Thus defeated by the blooming bough, the pretty metaphor for a young girl, he departs and meets his friend Yên-pé-hân as downcast as himself. So great is the mortification of the two friends, that to avoid all future intercourse with Chên-Taï, they disguise their real place of abode from her father, and thus unconsciously turn their backs on happiness; for Yên-pé-hân was received by Ling-kiang-sioné, and P'ing-jon-heng by Chên-Taï, and each was vanquished by the love of the other. The two young girls first discover this unfortunate mistake, and deplore it bitterly.

"Why must success be so difficult," says Ling-kiang-sioné; "a little while ago you had been east and I west, we should each have found ourselves with our chosen bridegroom."

The perplexities do not stop here, though the interest they create decreases as the tale goes on. Even in a Chinese story we know what the ending will be, and here, spite the obstinacy of the two students in remaining concealed, they are discovered and compelled to be happy. The Emperor condescends to intimate that they are to marry two literary ladies, and with heavy hearts they prepare to obey. P'ing-jon-heng discovers indeed, that his bride is his Ling-kiang-sioné; but it is only when he has brought her home to his house that Yên-pé-hân removing her veil, recognizes his unknown love in Chên-Taï.

The day after their marriage Yên-pé-hân seeing his wife surrounded by servant girls, vainly looks for her pretty secretary amongst them.

"You shall see her in a month," says Chên-Taï, and Ling-kiang-sioné gives the same answer to her husband; the end of the month when they all four meet, reveals the mystery to Yên-pé-hân and P'ing-jon-heng. These two happy couples are sent for by the Emperor, and the Son of Heaven receives them at the gate called Jonân-mên, and offers them a banquet. "Formerly," says the Emperor, after having seen the verses of Chên-Taï on the white swallows,

"I learned that there were marvellous talents amongst women. After this, considering what talent shone in the

inner apartment, I thought of seeking for men of extraordinary talent in the empire. Now that I have found two men and two women of talent, I have united them to display the happy influence of a pacific and enlightened administration. The wishes of my heart are fulfilled. Though I have married you all four, yet if we go up to the origin of this double union, it is plain that the white swallows have been the go-betweens."

The tale closes with the almost unnecessary assurance that the two marriages were of the happiest.

"In the capital tradition has preserved to this day the names of P'ing, Chên, Ling, and Yên, and they are honoured as having shone by their literary talent. In reading the annals during my leisure moments I conceived for them an inexpressible affection which induced me to write their story."

Thus ends this very curious tale, in which literature acts a more striking part than we have been able to show, the beauty of the poetry quoted being almost unintelligible in the translation. It is very certain that if this be fine poetry, poetry in China is essentially dependent upon rhythm and rhyme—upon all that the stranger cannot hope to appreciate. In substance and subject the Two Young Girls of Letters is very like another Chinese novel—the Two Cousins, in which two beautiful poetesses figure at length, and end by marrying the same man. No doubt the celestial empire did not hold two men worthy of their accomplishments. In both tales, to drink wine, write verses on walls, and delight in gazing on plum trees in bloom, are amongst the poetic attributes.

* There is no denying that those intellectual stories, with their intellectual loves, are somewhat frigid. Here is another kind, much more like our own short tale of the old romantic school, but with a simple and tender charity we should hardly look for in anything Chinese.

An old man, whose name was Leon, and whose surname was Té, lived with his wife on the banks of the great canal, in a village called Wou, when Siouan-tsung of the Ming dynasty was on the throne; that is to say, between the years 1426 and 1436 of our era. Wou, though a small place, was constantly visited by travellers on their way up and down the canal. Leon and his wife were about sixty; they were childless, ten acres of land and a few houses, one of which was an inn, were all they could call their own. Leon's character, as drawn by the author, is both honourable and good.

"Leon had devoted his whole lifetime to doing good, and his greatest pleasure was to relieve the unhappy. If the persons who came to drink in his house by chance had no money, Leon never complained; if when they paid him they gave him more than his due, Leon kept that only and returned the rest. On no account would Leon have kept a farthing that was not his. His friends often said to him: 'How simple you are to return that which has been given to you by mistake; it is a present sent by heaven, you ought to avail yourself of it.'"

"I have no children," answered Leon; "that misfortune, no doubt, springs from my not having practised virtue in my previous life: heaven punishes me in the present by depriving me of an heir, who, when I shall be no more, could offer the funeral sacrifices; and if that misfortune is not

decreed by fate, yet by keeping even one farthing not belonging to me, I might draw down on myself some calamity or a mortal illness."

On a cold and snowy day, the good Lieon, as he was called, was drinking hot wine with his wife, when two guests, a man and a child, took shelter in his inn. The man was sixty, his legs were wrapped in cloth bandages, he wore linen slippers, and a blue silk garment, the child, a lovely boy, wore small pink boots, and an elegantly embroidered overcoat. Lieon offers them hot wine, vegetables and meat; this they do not touch, and Lieon delicately supposes that they are fasting.

The traveller, a worn-out soldier, frankly confesses the truth. He is poor, he is short of money, he must be satisfied with rice and vegetables; Lieon is moved to the very heart.

"In this severe weather," he said, "you require good food to restore your strength; take meat and rice; you can then meet wind and cold. I entreat you eat to your fill; I do not ask a farthing for your expenses."

"Sir," said the old soldier, "do not laugh at my sincerity, but I cannot believe that one gives a traveller to eat and drink for nothing."

But Lieon is in good earnest; his guest moved at his charity thanks him warmly.

"Men are all brethren," answers Lieon; "besides that food is of little worth; why then talk of gratitude."

The guests eat of the substantial food placed before them; cups of hot wine help to restore their strength; but the storm which they attempt to brave is too keen; they are compelled to turn back, and Lieon hospitably gives them beds for the night. When Fang-yong, the traveller, came down the next morning with his boy Chin-sul, he found Lieon and his wife sitting by the fire.

"Sir," said Lieon, on perceiving the old man, "there is fire here, if you are cold; come and sit with us."

"With pleasure," replied Fang-yong; "but the presence of Madam prevents me from accepting your civility; I fear it would be a breach of decorum."

"We are all three of the same age," answers Lieon; "these sorts of ceremonies are not made for us."

Fang-yong approached with his son and sat by the fire.

There is nothing in this little domestic scene and picture; nothing but their wonderful similarity to all that daily takes place around us. It requires the allusion to decorum to remind us of the East, even as the good Lieon's system of his sins in a previous life, punished in this, suggest that though his charity is world wide, his religious opinions are not quite our own.

The cold has seized Fang-yong, and brought on fever; he cannot continue his journey. Spite the unremitting attention of Lieon and his wife, spite the grief of Chin-sul, the poor worn-out soldier expires on the seventh day. Lieon has the stranger buried with all due regard to the rites which the Chinese consider so essential, not merely to decency, but to the peace and honour of the dead, and Chin-sul falling prostrate before him, asks to remain to be his servant as a poor acknowledgment for so many priceless boons. Lieon answers:

"If I can find a son in you I shall thank Heaven for the unhelped for favour. But can I allow you to fulfil a servant's office. No; from this day forward we must use no names save those of father and son."

"I obey your orders with joy," answered the young man. "From this day forward you are my father, and you, madam, are my mother."

Chin-sul knelt between two chairs, and begging Lieon and his wife to be seated, he four times hailed them as their adopted son."

Chin-sul, now called Lieon-fang, proves a pious and devoted son. He emulates the virtues of his benevolent father, and touched with pity at the sight of a shipwrecked youth, whose barque had perished in a tempest on the canal, he brings him home to his parents, by whom he is recalled to life, and charitably entertained. The stranger is full of gratitude, but laments that having lost all he possessed, he cannot reward Lieon suitably.

"The feeling of humanity is born in all men," nobly answers Lieon. "It is better to save a man's life than to erect a seven-storied pagoda in honour of Buddha. To talk of reward would be to attribute interested views to me. Such feelings are far from my heart."

Lieon-Ké, the stranger, was wounded in the wreck, and his wounds are long healing. A tender friendship springs up between him and Lieon-fang, and he says to him one day:

"Young and gifted as you are, why do you not study the classic authors and the historians?"

"My brother," answers Lieon-fang—for they have exchanged that name of affection—"I have long had that desire, but where shall I find one to teach me?"

Lieon-Ké at once offers to become that teacher; books are procured, and Lieon-fang proves an apt pupil. He studies the day in the shop, reads all night long, and in a few months he knows the four moral books and the five canonical ones, and he can compose with facility on every literary subject. At the end of six months Lieon-Ké being restored, takes his departure. He leaves his benefactors for a sacred purpose, to bury his parents, whose bones he carries with him, and when the days of mourning are over, he promises to return. He goes, and the generous Lieon gives him a mule, under pretence of not wanting it himself; a blanket to wrap himself up in during his journey, and warm clothes accompany the present. To leave nothing undone Lieon takes ten ounces of silver from his sleeve and presents them to Lieon-Ké for his travelling expenses.

"I cannot reward you in this life," says Lieon Ké, falling prostrate before him, "but in the next I will be your servant, and pay you back so far as in my power lies for your generous care and numerous benefits."

The native place of Lieon-Ké having been inundated, he cannot as he intended lay the bones of his parents with their ancestors. He returns to his benefactors, hoping that they will grant him a few feet of earth for the dead, and a kind home for the living. There is some one in the well-known shop when he reaches it: it is Lieon-fang holding a book and studying.

"My brother," exclaims Lieon-ké, "how have your father and mother been since my departure?"

Lieon-Fang lifts his eyes and recognizes Lieon-Ké. He puts down his book, goes to receive his brother, and taking the mule by the bridle, leads it to the door of the house. As soon as he has taken care of the baggage and bowed to Lieon-Ké: "My father and mother are here," he says; "since your departure they have not ceased thinking of you;" and taking him by the hand he leads him in. The ceremonious friendliness of his welcome is emulated by Lieon-Ké in presence of the aged couple. It is only after complying with all the prostrations and bows that he relates his journey, proffers his request, which is granted, and finally becomes the second adopted son of Lieon and his wife. Their goodness is rewarded by the virtues, gratitude and industry of their two sons, thanks to whose efforts their business becomes more prosperous every day. But "time flies as swiftly as the lightning-flash across the sky," says the Chinese author, and little more than a year after Lieon-Ké's return, Lieon and his wife fall ill. Lieon-Fang and Lieon-Ké watch by them day and night, "and do not even loosen their girdle" to take a moment's rest; sacrifices are offered to the gods, the best doctors are called in: all is useless. Lieon and his wife become conscious of their dying state, and Lieon's advice to his adopted sons is full of good counsel; especially does he bid them be united; knowing that they are so will make him and his wife rest in peace "near the nine fountains of the dark world below." We may be sure that sons so pious fail in none of the funeral rites. Lieon and his wife are laid in magnificent shrouds and coffins; a tomb is built, and that all the dead they love may rest near them, Lieon-Fang undertakes a journey and brings back the bones of his mother.

"When all was ready, and they had chosen a lucky day, they placed in the middle of the tomb Lieon and his wife; then Lieon-Ké laid the bones of his father on the right hand, and Lieon-Fang those of his mother on the left. The three coffins were placed in a row, like three pearls exactly alike."

The two brothers, reflecting on their position, agree to give up the inn, and to open a shop for the sale of stuffs. They are active, honest, and the shop is full from morning till night; within two years they become highly prosperous, and the rich men of the place begin to think that Lieon-Fang and Lieon-Ké are two very desirable sons-in-law.

Lieon-Ké has no objection to marriage, but Lieon-Fang will not hear of it. They are happy together, why bring in a strange woman whose temper may perhaps destroy their union and ruin their business. "You know the saying," replies Lieon-Ké, "no good house-keeping without a wife," whilst we are in the shop there is no one to mind our domestic concerns. Then as our acquaintance spreads daily, suppose strangers come to see us, we have no one to receive them properly. Pray tell me what figure we shall cut in the world? But this is only a trifle. When the good Lieon and his wife adopted us for their sons, it was in the hope of having one day descendants to keep their tombs and offer them funeral sacrifices. But if you refuse to marry, you

destroy all their hopes, and pay back their benefits with the blackest ingratitude."

Lieon-Fang however remains inexorable, and Lieon-Ké, though the elder, not liking to marry alone, remains single, to his great mortification. A friend suggests that Lieon-Fang's aversion for marriage is neither natural nor sincere, and suggests putting him to the test. The opportunity of doing so offers itself; two of the go-betweens, without which a Chinese marriage is weak and imperfect, inform Lieon-Ké that they have found the right bride for Lieon-Fang; a young girl who is evidently destined to be his wife, for does not the comparison of the hour of their birth shew a wonderful agreement, and are not the characters of the tickets of their ages admirably matched? Lieon-Ké sends these messengers of love to Lieon-Fang, who soon and angrily sends them about their business. The obstinate youth will not be made happy.

"One day Lieon-Ké saw a swallow building its nest on a roof. He took a brush, and to sound Lieon-Fang once more, he wrote the following verses on the wall:

"The swallows build their nests; in pairs they bring morning and night the clay wanted for their frail dwelling. They exchange mutual help, and share the same cares and the same fatigues. If the male bird did not seek a companion to have young ones, and thus acquire a posterity, the nest would be empty before the close of the year."

Lieon-Fang having seen those verses, read them several times smiling, then taking a brush, he wrote the following lines on the same rhymes:

"The swallows build their nests, in pairs they skim across the plain, or soar in the air. A long time ago did heaven establish the links which bind the male swallow to his companion. When this one has found her bridegroom, all her wishes are fulfilled. Is there in this world a male swallow that knows not its companion?"

The rapidity with which the Chinese interpret poetical compositions is one of the curious features of these tales. No sooner has Lieon-Ké read these verses than, without a moment's hesitation, he comes to a startling conclusion: Lieon-Fang is a girl; her light form, her modesty, reserve, and aversion to marriage, betray her, though late; but the subject is too delicate to be hastily mentioned by Lieon-Ké; he waits, takes counsel, and at length asks Lieon-Fang for more verses on swallows. The poetry continues to be explicit, and Lieon-Ké exclaims in the formal Chinese speech: "My brother, you are really a young lady."

Lieon-Fang blushes with downcast eyes, and does not answer. When pressed with questions she speaks, but says little. Prudence made her first adopt the male dress; but why she did not reveal her secret to the deceased Lieon and his wife, and to her adopted brother, Lieon-Ké, she does not say. He does not ask, but admires frankly her quiet strength of mind, "beyond her sex and years."

"We have met in life like two frail water plants driven one towards the other by the waters of the flood, after having been many years the sport of wind and wave. Formerly we were brothers, now let us be bride and bridegroom. To heaven alone do we owe this unhopd for happiness."

If you condescend to agree to my wishes, we shall contract a union which death alone shall break."

"Your wish is also mine," answered Lieon-Fang, "and the happiness you anticipate, I also hope for. The three tombs of our parents are likewise in this spot. If I were to take another husband, how could I visit, morning and evening, the grave where my mother reposes? Besides my adopted parents have always treated me like their own child. If I were to forsake this house which holds all that is dearest to me, what joy could I know for the rest of my days? Oh! my brother, if you do not find me too deficient in attraction, allow me to remain with you to guard the tombs of our parents, and offer them funeral sacrifices. This is your servant's most ardent desire. But it would offend the rites if we were united without a *go-be' ween*; we must also shun suspicion and give scandal no hold."

Accordingly they separate; a friend's wife acts as go-between; Lieon-Fang takes female garments, and after choosing a fortunate day, Lieon-Fang and Lieon-Ké go to the tombs of their parents, offer sacrifices, prepare a magnificent feast, and cause innumerable lanterns to be lit. Thus are they united in the midst of great joy, whilst all around them exalt the goodness of Lieon, and the filial piety and innocence of his two adopted children.

This simple tale needs no comment. It could be written in any country, as it appeals to feelings common in every land: charity, gratitude and innocence.

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE LOW COUNTRIES.

NEITHER alliance, offensive and defensive, nor solemn treaty officially guaranteed by "the other powers of Europe," connects in the remotest way our own island population with the four millions of *braves Belges* who live, and it must be allowed, flourish under the paternal rule of Leopold the Beloved.

Nevertheless, a tacit understanding of amicable relationship has somehow been established. We natives of the Green Isle do not regard the Flemish lowlands as half so foreign as other continental regions; while the people of that tight little kingdom freely fraternize with *les Irlandais*, experience having taught them how much more congenial to their taste they are than the stand-off, purse-proud Britishers. Possibly some minute link which majestic history, in its seven-leagued strides, may have failed to notice, connects in the past these races of men whose destiny has been so various. Or it may be nothing more, in this instance, than similarity of certain traits of character establishing a subtler sympathy between mere strangers, than would necessarily have existed if the parties had been born to speak a common tongue, or descended from a kindred stock. The chain of relationship is not palpable to the senses, but like the submarine telegraph, the bond of unity is visible at either end.

However, without searching too deeply the science of cause and effect, it is a fact that our travelled countrymen—unless they be of the unhappy pugnacious class who have the quixotic habit of regarding harmless windmills which come in their way as armed aggressors, or of the express locomotive sort, who whirl through

space with all the steam up—enjoy invariably the pleasant feeling of being quite at home in Belgium, and are sure to carry away kindly recollections of the people, and a genial impression that it would be agreeable still further to improve the acquaintance, if opportunity should allow. Like the good folk at home, the subjects of Leopold are friendly and hospitable, simple-hearted, and full of unobtrusive, true politeness. The air of the younger women brings to mind our own graceful, guileless country girls; a trace of Spanish blood observable in certain quarters rather heightening the resemblance. The costume of both young and old, of the peasant and artisan class, is so suggestive of old recollections, that in Bruges and Ghent, where the long black cloak with silken hood, and pretty white cap are usually worn, we have many a time and oft been reminded of a Sunday congregation in the cathedral of Killarney; whilst again the *Grande Place* at Mechlin, and the *Place de Meir* at Antwerp, at certain times forcibly recall a market-day at Galway or Athlone, the busy vendors of garden and farm produce, with bright coloured petticoats and kerchiefs, wanting only a touch of the Connaught brogue to make the illusion complete.

Then the common bond of faith exerts no trifling influence in drawing the heart of the Irish Catholic more closely to the faithful Netherlands; more especially from the contrast presented by the outward condition of the church in the two countries. In Belgium the piety and unwavering orthodoxy of the great mass of the people have secured this advantage, that the religious institutions have scope to accomplish their Christian work with the aid, and under the patronage of the legislature, and that the magnificent churches which are the glory of their many cities, are kept in order and repair, and their treasures of art preserved with scrupulous care, by the different municipalities. Here no factory chimney vomiting coal-fumes overtops the cross-crowned spire of the temple; here, no din of traffic or of toil silences the consecrated chimes of the turreted belfries. The people, though thrifty and laborious, are prayerful also. The cathedrals and churches of the ancient cities of the Low Countries are seldom without their groups of pious worshippers, and on Sundays and fête days never lack a numerous and orderly congregation—such a congregation as can profit by the solemnity and splendour with which the functions of religion are performed, and appreciate the glorious productions of art, which for their edification are preserved within the sacred walls.

Fine pictures adorn the altars, and works in sculpture people nave and aisles. The pulpits, from which are promulgated words of saving doctrine, are miracles of art, the wood and stone work giving form—we had almost said life—to lessons of salvation and divinely-uttered promises of pardon and of peace. In one church, it is an elaborately carved chapter of sacred history, spread out from base to apex of arch; the figures large as life, cut in wood as effectively as if chiselled out of faultless marble. Adam and Eve are expelled from Paradise; the tempter twines in gigantic coils around trunk and

branches of the tree of knowledge, the foliage of which encircles the chair of Truth raised in the midst; whilst high above all, rises the form of the immaculate Virgin predestined to crush the serpent's head. In another the Conversion of St. Paul is represented to the life; horse and rider overthrown as the light from heaven shone around, and the Voice was heard of Him who changed the persecutor of God's people into a vessel of election. Or we have the Calling of Andrew and Peter; the boat drawn in, and the disciples come on shore to the Lord, who will make them fishers of men, and send them forth with a commission to "go and teach all nations." Or again, the miracle of restoring sight to the blind man, is delineated with the loftiest expression. Round these wondrously wrought pulpits, before which the lovers of art sit down as a study, it is touching to see grouped the homely Flemish population, listening to a sermon in their native tongue. Evidently if their attention should wander from the subject of the spoken word, their thoughts cannot go far astray while their eyes are resting upon these sculptured lessons.

The confessionals are of a match with the pulpits; equally splendid as far as decoration and artistic skill are concerned, and just as simple in the truth and feeling which those carvers in wood have made them the medium of conveying. David and Magdalen, and penitents crowned and cowed, and recording angels, and ministers of mercy, full sized and modelled to the life, are standing there at the tribunal; and the contrite sinner, unlettered though he be, need not want a text for meditation, making his preparation for the sacrament that loosens from sin. It speaks well for the people that these choice works are not railed off or enclosed in any way, and yet stand there uninjured generation after generation. Sometimes a rim about a foot high encircles the pulpit, as a barrier against the inroads of very little children, who might otherwise get in among the oars and nets of the disciples' bark, or get astride the startled charger of the apostle of the Gentiles.

And the music in those churches!—It falls, now gently on the ear like "soft whispering rain-drops" at "shut of day" in summer; now, like distant thunder-utterances among the mountains, deep answering unto deep, in sonorous reverberation along the vaulted aisles. The clear, high voices of the choir boys, the full swell of the barytone and bass, are floated down on the massive body of the organ accompaniment, through which mysterious cadences of stringed instruments are interwoven with a wayward harmony, and clarionet and flute break forth with sad and thrilling resonance. It greatly heightens the effect that the music has ample room and verge enough, and that the locality of the orchestre cannot be fixed merely by dint of listening. Sometimes the anthem seems to float up the nave, or pour out of a distant sanctuary, or tremble through the delicate net-work of the screen, or burst resoundingly from the gallery beneath the west window. A cathedral service in any of the great cities of Belgium is something to be remembered;—solemn, soothing, sanctifying; and it need hardly be added, is of a style totally unlike what we are used to, but unreconciled to

in more northern countries, where devotion is oftener impeded than augmented by the proceedings which take place in the organ loft, where the choristers are crying for mercy as if they had no idea what they were asking for, or continue shouting for peace with astounding clamour; while the tenor voice splits your ears, and the counter-tenor sets your teeth on edge, and the organ, far too big for the church, makes the woodwork throughout the edifice creak and tremble in a manner unpleasantly calculated to recall the premonitory symptoms of seasickness.

Had a set plan been thought advisable to draw these countries into close friendly relations, nothing more effectual could have been suggested than the practice which in a great measure prevails, of bringing up the younger members of the families together. It is becoming every day more and more the custom to send both boys and girls for education to Belgium, where considerable advantages are to be had at a very reasonable rate, and where, ordinary precautions being taken, a thoroughly religious training may be secured. Often are children placed for some years in one or other of the large schools in the neighbourhood of Brussels, Ghent, or Bruges. Often also, while the younger branches are pursuing a course of arts and sciences, whole families migrate and settle down in those quaint, orderly cities. The arrangement is convenient where there is question of limited means. Luxuries can be had there for what would hardly procure necessities at home; "well-regulated families" can have sufficient amusement for little or nothing; and to crown all, good Catholics, especially if they come from the interior of our island, when once established under the shadow of those magnificent cathedrals, are apt to fancy themselves, if not actually in heaven, at least within one of the outer courts of the New Jerusalem.

But if the advantages to residents are numerous and considerable, the pleasures in store for mere tourists are likewise great and varied; provided always, as we hinted before, they take time for enjoyment. Belgium has been called the paradise of travellers, and there is justice in the designation. Once landed there, all goes smoothly. Certainly Dr. Syntax coming to the Low Countries in search of the picturesque in scenery, would have been, however reluctantly, obliged to move on; and individuals on the look out for marvellous incidents to furnish out Munchausen stories, must also of necessity take another road. But well-read, cultivated, art-loving men and women find great enjoyment awaiting them, as do likewise sober, matter-of-fact, sensible persons of every age and condition. Students of medieval times can spend many delightful days amidst the monuments which survive in splendid cities, where every corner owns a memorable history. Artists have galleries and churches for indoor study and delectation; and as for studies from nature, are only at a loss how to choose, where every vista down a quaint old street, of which a canal is the highway, has its own special character and picturesqueness, and every glimpse of tower and townhall rising over the mass of gabled roofs

or suddenly caught at an angle of narrow street or spacious market-place, is a ready-made Prout sketch.

Both practical and theoretical agriculturists can engage themselves in very profitable observations from carriage windows as the train steams by. The country everywhere assumes the aspect of a vast extent of kitchen garden, so varied are the patches of cultivation, so scrupulously tidy the style of farming operations. Not a moment is lost between clearing off one crop and setting another. Ploughing, harrowing, manuring, planting, sowing, weeding, reaping, are not unfrequently going on all together in a field of three or four acres. The soil is in some parts naturally poor; but this defect is not observable in the quality of the standing crops; it is only apparent when a patch of ground has been newly brought under cultivation. In that stage of progress the field looks like an acre of shifting sand transported from Sahara, and it is amusing to see the ease with which a single horse draws the plough at a gentle trot along the furrows. The absence of stone walls to separate the little plots of tillage, and the scarcity of regular woods and grazing farms, combine to perfect this garden-like resemblance. The country, thus flat and open on all sides, affords every facility for a long look out; and it must be confessed that, failing bold mountain scenery, and inland waters flowing with rapid current, and luxurious expanse of lawn and park, it is, taking it all in all, a very pleasant look out. For the eye rests contentedly upon the face of a country, which hourly industry makes productive a hundred fold, and where peace and frugal plenty have their home.

Another help to observation is afforded the curious, by the easy-going style of railway travelling in Belgium, which seems to have been adapted with a view of satisfying the minds of passengers that there is "time for all things;" that disastrous collisions, running off the line, and such like direful results of being in too great a hurry, are "moving incidents" not likely to occur on these lines even once in a century. The train, indeed, runs very leisurely through the open country, and occasionally over a grass-grown road. No trouble is spared in giving notice of arrival or departure; over and above the customary whistle and shriek, conductor's bugle gives assurance on every opportunity that all is right; and such is the regard the good Netherlanders have for regularity, and such their respect for the venerable precept of taking time by the fore-lock, that it is publicly requested that *Messieurs les voyageurs* will have the kindness to be at the station half-an-hour before departure of the *convoi*!

Yet, in spite of the time thus devoted to securing the safe conduct of the traveller, it is never very long before one's destination is reached. Belgium, though very little more than one-third the extent of Ireland, is crowded with cities, every one of which might be the capital of a much larger kingdom. In fact, the high towers of one city are hardly out of sight before the rival spires of another appear upon the horizon. These points of interest are situated, so to speak, in a cluster;

so that proceeding in a circle is nearer the mark than darting in a straight line on any side. As in other cases, however, there is a right and a wrong way of beginning. We do not recommend the tourist to make straight for Belgium's capital, or to land first of all at Antwerp, though it is a fine thing to steam up the Scheldt, to the very foundations of that sky-seeking spire which seems to swing and sway in the blue empyrean.

No; our advice is, to cross over from Dover, or take the packet from St. Catherine's wharf, and let the first view of the coast of Flanders be caught at the point where Ostend presents itself like the contents of an old-fashioned Dutch toy-box upset on the table, and settled out as a city; the bright little red house-tops peeping over the ramparts, the church with its steeple in the middle of the parish, and a handful of wind-mills scattered to the best advantage over the surrounding plain. Only there is this difference between Ostend and our toy cities, that a long line of beach stretches on one side, with a prim little light-house, and a pier that can stand the shock of channel billows, to say nothing of a mighty array of bathing machines, which, despoiled a few miles off, cannot be accounted for, unless they represent a regiment of town's-people with white caps upon their heads, assembled on the shore to welcome the packet and ourselves as we steam into harbour. If it be "the season," and the tourist arrive at the proper hour, and with a proper appetite, the table d'hôte at the Hotel D'Allemagne will afford, besides a good dinner, an opportunity of getting some idea of what Belgium can produce of beauty and fashion, in the person of visitors come to enjoy the constitutional exercise of jolting and floundering in those amphibious vehicles we have alluded to.

There is no farther inducement to tarry longer on the frontier. The steam is getting up over the way; you may take your place, and by and by, when you are well nigh "settled" for the journey, and have run through a few fields, if you put your head out of the window, you will see the belfry of Bruges emerging from the low horizon, and gradually the towers, spires, battlements of that ancient stronghold of liberty, once "the Venice of the North," starting into view in goodly array. If you take your eyes off that famous belfry before the *convoi* leaves you almost at the base of it, and you hear the chimes ring out so musically half a mile high, as it were, in the sky, and you see the birds, which make themselves at home in every babel, careering round the top-most buttress, you do not deserve to travel in the Netherlands—that is all! We confess to a weakness for those old spires and towers of church and townhall, which are met with on every side in Belgium. They are grand and graceful objects for the eye to rest on. They help to make one realize the marvels of past history. The bells and chimes which now only toll forth a summons for God's people to gather in for matins, mass, and vespers, or sweetly ring out snatches of melody to tell that another span of the shifting present has floating into the abiding past, are the same

metal voices that once uttered shrill alarm and thundering tocsin, when tumult within or terror without called to arms the warlike citizens of these little commonwealths, "companies of weavers," or regiments of mailed men, according to the need of the hour.

But to descend from our giddy elevation among the chimées—Bruges is the best place to begin with, it is so totally unlike everything left behind. It is like stepping into the middle ages at once. If some native Rip van Winkle, who fell into his long sleep hundreds of years ago, awoke now before the *Palais des Francs*, or on one of the many bridges spanning the canals, he would not miss many of the old landmarks, though he might rub his eyes vigorously to get rid of a fancy that something queer had come over outline and hue of the well-known objects. But the dead silence of the place might well astound the worthy burgher who, perhaps, had dozed off in an age when the premier dukes of Christendom held their court magnificently in the capital of West Flanders; when ships with rich freights from the ends of the earth crowded her harbour; when the varied tongues of civilized nations were heard in her market-place; when envoys from states and principalities had residences in her stately streets; when Bruges could bring her thousands of trained soldiers into the field, and was audacious enough to take prisoner their own sovereign Maximilian, king of the Romans, and keep him shut up in a house on the *Grande Place*, despite of Pope and Kaiser, until he swore on his knees in the middle of the square, to restore the privileges of the city.

Certainly the silence which prevails throughout this noble city is astonishing even to those who do not stop to realize what once must have been the bustle, the life, the splendour of its moving world. The strangest thing is, that though the ancient glory has departed, there has been no lapse into squalid misery; an air of quiet dignity is still preserved. One might fancy the princely men of Bruges had taken to lotus-eating in some far-off island, forgetting home and country; or had lain down in their graves, leaving no survivors, only their stately mansions for their monuments. Some few years since, it was no figure of speech to say the streets were grass-grown; and only for the incessant ringing of bells, it might have been truly called the City of the Silent. Last autumn, however, we could not but notice many signs of an improved condition. There is much more life in the streets; new buildings are being constructed here and there; convenient footways are in course of construction; the Church of *Notre Dame* has got its spire completed to a height of four hundred feet, and a new church has been erected. The work of restoration goes on apace; the *Hôtel de Ville*, five hundred years old, has suddenly grown young again; the statues of the Counts of Flanders, demolished by the brigands of revolutionary France, have been replaced, and even the gilded ornaments on the roof retouched. Lastly, the famous Hospital of St. John, wherein the wounded Memling was tended by the pious sisterhood four hun-

dred years ago, is undergoing repairs, and will soon be considerably enlarged.

No matter what way the world wagged, the worthy burghers of Bruges, whether in the enjoyment of actual prosperity, or only remembering better days, were ever an art-loving people. When their schools no longer produced men of might in the use of pallet and brush, they at least jealously preserved the treasures they had inherited. Hans Memling is the great glory of Bruges, and he can only be fitly studied here, where there are about forty-five of his works collected in the gallery of the Hospital of St. John, and the academy. The most celebrated of all are the property of the first-named institution. The *châsse*, or reliquary of St. Ursula, upon which scenes from the life and martyrdom of that virgin and her companions, are delineated with gem-like purity of colour, and the finish of the most delicate miniature, is still the wonder of the unlearned, and the admiration of the connoisseur. The guardians of this renowned work fulfilled their trust so effectually, that the plundering French, bent upon enriching their capital with the artistic spoils of every nation, were unable to possess themselves of what they so much coveted. When they came in search of the *châsse*, it was no where to be found. For a long time the pretty story was current that the *châsse* of St. Ursula was painted, and presented to the hospital in token of the painter's gratitude for the attention he received whilst a patient in the institution. However, an entry in the account-books of the convent has recently been brought to light, which proves that he received a commission to execute this work from the Superioress of the community; and it is even said that he was furnished with funds to travel to the Rhine country for the better perfecting of the masterpiece. Though the old romance is destroyed, the fact that remains is a sufficiently interesting one. We like to think of the art-loving, liberal-handed Superioress, and of the conscientious painter, who not only took pains that his colours should stand the dust and grime of four centuries, but was even solicitous that the background of his wondrous delineations should be literally after nature. A chance memorandum is almost the only record time has preserved of this gifted man. Up to this day the actual place of his birth is unknown, and the date of his death a matter of dispute. He left to posterity works of genius that are worth their weight in gold ten times over, but cared not that men should prattle of the story of his poor human life.

In the academy are preserved some valuable examples of another famous painter of the school, John Van Eyck, or John of Bruges. Like most of the distinguished members of the Painters' Guild all the world over, he was a man of character and of varied accomplishments. Philip the Good, who held his court at Bruges with more than regal state, held Van Eyck in great esteem, and not only kept him in his service as court painter, but often sent him on important embassies, and employed him in offices of trust. Some few particulars, therefore, of the life of Van Eyck have come down to us; but the year of his death was uncertain

until a rummage among the records of the Church of St. Donat fixed the date at last in 1441.* This church, in which the painter was buried, was pulled down by the French in the first revolution. For three centuries funeral masses were celebrated in the month of July every year for the repose of the soul of the said Master John Van Eyck, the painter. The site of the church is now a desolate-looking square, planted with trees, among which a statue has been erected in honour of the great man who was there laid to rest.

Not only are the treasures of ancient art scrupulously preserved in Bruges, but care is likewise taken to cultivate talent in the rising generation. The Royal Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, is attended by a class of four hundred pupils, who receive gratuitous instruction from eminent professors paid by the municipal government. Prizes are awarded at stated times with great pomp and ceremony.

Other evidences are not wanting to show that Bruges, in spite of its fallen estate, is not the last of all in the march of nineteenth-century civilization. The bishop of that ancient diocese, Monsignor Malou, who, it may be remembered, was so greatly distinguished among the dignitaries assembled at Rome, on the occasion of the definition of the Immaculate Conception, is a man full of zeal and energy, with administrative talents of a high order, qualifying him to rule and guide his flock, and defend it from the enemy, no matter how subtly disguised. As an instance: We have been told that the bishop requires that every lady desirous of entering a religious order devoted to the education of youth, shall prepare herself for the science of instruction by attending, for one or two years, a kind of model school established in the diocese for this special purpose, under the care of a sisterhood. Even such as had taken the veil previous to this new arrangement, are not exempt from the duty of undergoing this preparatory course; but must also for a season, variously clothed as they are in the habits of the different orders, take their places on the school benches, becoming even "like little children," that they may learn how to combine religious training with the highest development of mind and intellect.

Another great and good man, the centre of whose work is at Bruges, is the Very Rev. Canon Maes, director and superior of the Hospital of St. Julian. This earnest-hearted man has devoted fortune and life to the task of carrying out what he believed, and what he has fully proved, to be the only Christian and successful mode of dealing with persons unhappily afflicted with permanent or temporary insanity. In St. Julian's, where none but patients of this class are received, the extreme of kindness has been substituted for force; unremitting watchfulness for strait waistcoats and manacles; the hallowed influences of religion are daily and hourly brought to bear upon the troubled spirit, and

zealous souls devoted to the work "for God's sake," take the place of hired servants. The Canon resides in the hospital, and a community of nuns, founded for this special work, have the control of the internal arrangements. It is only necessary to hear the Canon speak with a noble enthusiasm of the subject which occupies his every thought, and look upon the benign countenance of the Superioress, and witness the superhuman devotion of the gentle sisters, to feel very sure that it is the work of God that is being accomplished within those walls, and that the friends of the stricken creatures who are confided to such care, may in their souls be satisfied they have placed them well. This, of course, is not a show place. People do not visit St. Julian's unless they have business, or the advantage of previous acquaintance with the Canon or the nuns. Moreover, it is a somewhat gloomy pile of buildings. It is the Canon's head-quarters, however, and patients are always brought to it in the first instance, though subsequently they are often removed to one or other of the branch establishments in the country, according as they may require change of air or scene, or a different mode of treatment.

The chief of these branch establishments is that at Cortenberg, beautifully situated in the open country, between Brussels and Louvain. This house is for female patients only, and the accommodation provided for the better class is particularly good. As we had the honour of knowing the resident director, the Abbé R—, a worthy disciple of Canon Maes, some of the nuns, and one or two of the *pensionnaires*, and as we received a most cordial welcome, and a hospitable invitation to put up at the establishment, we, nothing loth, consented. Two days and nights, with the run of the house, afforded ample opportunity for observation. The different classes occupy divisions of the building, or "quarters," entirely separated, and having yards and gardens of their own. There are the poor, who are paid for by the *communes* or parishes; the better order, again subdivided; those who are first-class *pensionnaires*, and have private apartments, and sometimes the special attendance of a sister, who stays with them day and night; such, again, as only suffer from slight nervous affections, but are better placed here, for chance of entire recovery, than they would be at home; these take their meals in the general dining-room, and are free to go in and out, visit the neighbouring cities, and so on; lastly, a few, who, after recovery, remain from choice, liking the order, the peace, the religious atmosphere of the place; and some, also, who have never required treatment of any kind, but wish to settle for a time near some afflicted friend or relative, a patient in the hospital.

The gentle, cheerful sisters, some of them countrywomen of our own, are to be met with at every turn. They are in the kitchen, in the infirmary, in the *salon*, in the *bureau*. They are talking to the *pensionnaires*, superintending the laundry operations of the convalescent among the poor; they are directing in the different wards, where patients are kept variously occupied in their calm or lucid intervals; they are in the quarter

* Item, for the inhuming of Master John van Eyck, the painter, xii livres of Paris. Item, ringing the bells for the decease of Master John van Eyck, the painter, xxiii shillings of Paris.

where the desperate cases are confined, who can do nothing but rave and dance, and act in every way like mad people. Most touching it is to see the nuns in the midst of the uproar which prevails in the latter division. Strength of body is required, scarcely less than strength of mind, by the sister who has care of "the furious." There is danger, of course, at times, but assistance is within call, and the most frantic, as a rule, love the nuns, so that, even in this abode of "unreason," the good feeling of the majority may be calculated on in a crisis. And when the poor sufferers come to die, the devoted sisters are still at their side. We have heard it more than once repeated by those who watch in this way, that in the generality of cases, a perfectly lucid interval occurs at the actual approach of death. One of the greatest consolations experienced by these ministering angels, is in the opportunity thus afforded of soothing the troubled spirit awakened from its long trance, and watching the poor soul depart, strengthened with the sacraments, and accompanied to the gates of eternity with the voices of prayer and intercession.

We have dwelt thus long upon our visit to these institutions, because it has struck us that some of our readers may take a useful hint from our account, and may remember, when instances of disordered intellect come under their notice, that there is another resource open to the friends of the afflicted besides the miserable choice between a public and a private lunatic asylum at home.

The first station on the road to Ghent, is Bloemendaal; thence a pleasant walk of three or four miles brings the traveller who wishes to visit Ruysselede, to the famous *Colonie Agricole*, or agricultural colony of that name. Before the pile of red brick buildings is caught sight of, the boundaries of the estate have been passed; and if it be the season for farming operations, the whole country will be alive with the boys of the *colonie*, out in large parties, tending cattle, weeding turnips, cutting black wheat, carting, or trudging merrily along the road, some with wooden shoes on their feet to keep them from the mud, some with wooden shoes in their hands to make them get along the faster. They always look pleasant, and seem quite "proud" to see strangers coming to visit the establishment. The main buildings, with the workshops, in which boys by the hundred are weaving, spinning, shoemaking, tailoring, are well worthy of a careful inspection; while the extensive farm-yard, with its various specimens of live-stock, from prize poultry to English pigs, and horses of the Flemish breed, will not fail to get its share of approbation. Over the tops of the trees, in a distant field, are seen the masts and rigging of a ship, which is at anchor in a pond, for a class of boys destined for sea service are put through their nautical exercise by a regular sailor. There is a look of healthy, cheerful life about the place. It is under secular management, M. Poll, the director, being to all appearance well qualified for his charge, and the subordinate officers intelligent and kindly. In the infirmary, where three or four boys

were laid up, we found a sister belonging to a community in the neighbourhood which has charge of a similar institution for girls; and in the *pharmacie* another was busy preparing medicines. There are about 700 boys, or "colonists," as they are called, in this institution, which combines the character of a reformatory for young offenders, and a workhouse for destitute children. In Belgium, as in France, young persons who offend against the law of the land, are not branded with the character of criminals, and thrown into jail, even as a fourteen-days' preparation for reformatory treatment, but are dismissed, as the phrase is, on the ground of having acted *sans discernement* (sinned through ignorance), and are sent for a stated time to such an establishment as this of Ruysselede, for their better training in the ways of virtue and industry. Such as are not of this class, are boys that with us would be paupers instead of colonists. Their parishes, or charitable persons, pay for them; and as Belgium has earned the title of "thrifty Belgium," it is reasonable to suppose this mode of treatment is found *cheaper* than ours, which prepares boys only for a life of vice or idleness. In fact, the demand of employers for boys trained at Ruysselede is greater than can be supplied. The same result holds good with respect to the girls of a similar class trained at Beernem. In the latter establishment we were particularly struck with the elegance of the chapel, the tasteful arrangement of the dormitories, and the simple yet picturesque dress of the girls. What a contrast all this affords to our workhouse bastilles at home!

The city of Ghent is the next point of interest. Two hours' rail from Bruges sets you down at the outskirts of the ancient capital of East Flanders. Its past history is just as magnificent as that of Bruges, its rival in war, and arts, and commerce; but the stir of the earlier time has not so completely died out, for, even now, Ghent is a thriving manufacturing city, the antiquated air of its canals, markets, streets, and squares, contrasting pleasantly with evidences of flourishing modern life in the building, restoration, and improvement going on around. The people are stronger, sturdier, noisier than the Bruges folk. The schoolmaster has been abroad here, they say, overmuch—that is, the free-thinking, free-living, French schoolmaster. Many of the lively spirits whom frequent revolutions first cast upon the surface, and then send adrift, have from time to time taken refuge in the busier Belgian cities, the inhabitants of which have, in some cases, become infected with the loose notions of the exiles. Secret societies have been established through this agency, and a section of the press is at the service of the party. The danger to faith and morals arising from the introduction of this new influence, is sufficiently great to make the guardians of both trebly vigilant; but the magnitude of the evil has been exaggerated. The turbulent talking hundreds make themselves heard, while the peace-loving thousands care not to "express their sentiments, but walk their humble way, pleasing to God and man. The great body of the people are staunch, and not an echo

of the new opinions ever reaches the *campine*, or country parts.

Few things pleased us more in the course of our rambles than the reverent, orderly demeanor of the Ghent people, who assembled by thousands one Sunday evening to witness and take part in a procession in honour of the Virgin. The *Marché au Vendredi*, and the line of streets through which the procession was to pass, were festooned in the prettiest manner, and hung tastefully with banners; fresh branches and tops of pine and fir trees were fastened against the doorposts, so that a pleasant tone of natural green was mingled with the showy tints of the textile decorations. The market place was a scene of the greatest animation—the people in their holiday costume passing and repassing in every direction, and pouring down the adjacent streets to join the procession at different stations. We took our position on a door-step in the vicinity of a narrow canal, bordered with houses on each side, in the windows of which vases of flowers were placed, and candles to be lighted when the procession drew near. Outside the houses in some instances pictures were hung. A jolly peal of bells in the steeple of a little church on one side, performed a whole tune from beginning to end with surprising energy. On the other side a stately old tower sent forth a solemn toll. Immediately in front, the street widened into a *Place*, and the church at the end, with doors thrown open, was all lit up and decorated in preparation for the pious rite to be celebrated within. The whole scene was a fitting frame-work for the imposing spectacle which soon presented itself, harmonizing admirably with the bands of musicians, banner-bearers, rows of silver lamps fixed on poles, richly adorned figures of saintly personages carried aloft by groups of girls under the care of Sisters of Charity, and files of boys accompanied by the Brothers of same order. As the priests in rich vestments, with head uncovered, approached carrying the remonstrance, the crowd in the streets knelt in adoration, and then in the most orderly manner followed to the church. There was no jostling, or scrambling, or crushing, not the least occasion for a troop of police, either horse or foot.

In the Cathedral of St Bavon we had witnessed the morning a most edifying sight in the immense congregation of devout worshippers which filled that magnificent edifice, while the grand high mass, and the subsequent low masses were being celebrated. Not only were nave and aisles filled, but the flights of steps leading to the side chapels round the choir, were crowded with men, women, and children, who though they could not see altar or priest, were nevertheless very attentive to their prayers. The silence was almost as complete—the for the congregation did not appear to be suffering from coughs or colds—as if there had not been a soul in the church.

When all save a few strangers had dispersed, the gates were closed for a few hours, and those who wished to see the wonderful pictures which hang in the various chapels of the cathedral, could do so without interfering with any one, or being themselves disturbed. One of the most ex-

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quisite productions of art in the world, belongs to this church—the “Adoration of the Spotless Lamb,” by the brothers Hubert and John Van Eyck. We are not going to describe it, because many know at least the outline by copies and engravings, and those that do not would be little the wiser by any account we could give. As John Van Eyck was the painter of the court, and received commissions from princes, so Hubert, who appears to have been the greater of the two, was the painter of the *commune*, and worked for the no less magnificent burghers of Ghent. It was a private citizen who founded the chapel, and commissioned the brothers to execute this great work for an altar-piece. But, when it was finished, and the chapel was consecrated with the greatest splendour and solemnity, and the citizens like swarms of bees came to wonder and admire, Hubert lay buried in the family vault of the founder, beneath the little chapel so regally adorned. In his epitaph the great artist prays those who walk over him to take warning, as art, honour, wisdom, power, affluence, are spared not when death arrives.—“It was in the year of the Lord one thousand four hundred and twenty-six, on the 18th day of September, that I rendered up my soul to God in suffering. Pray God for me, ye who love art, that I may attain to his sight.”

Here, however, in the midst of this city so full of present interest and wondrous memories, we must stop short in our round of visits. We have not got *carte blanche* to wander through the wide pages of the “*Hibernian*,” totally irrespective of time and space, neither have we ever had the slightest reason to suppose “our readers” are so charmed with our vagaries, that they never think of yawning in our company. So we vanish into thin air, making way for a worthier to come upon the scene. R.

EARL GERALD AND HIS BRIDE.*

BY ROBERT D. JOYCE.

WHEN love awakes within the youthful breast,
Its joys gleam brightest in the solitude
Of bloom-starred vale, or purple mountain crest,
Or where the blue doves build amid the wood;
There memory is sweetest, thought is best,
Flowing through heart and brain like the clear flood
That hurries down the green glades all day long,
With many a dulcet strain of murmuring song.

In solitude young Eileen stands by him
She loves the best, while calm skies o'er them gleam,
And grandly on Cnockfierna's purple rim
Day's huge orb rests, half sunk, short space to seem,
An arch, where thro' the fiery cherubim
Might spread their pinions earthward on the beam,
And light upon the mountain tops, and throw
The glory of their eyes on all below!

Young Eileen of Kilmoodan—pure and red
Her laughing lips as moss-rose in the sun,
As wing of raven on the mountain head
Her black locks in their glossy brightness shone;

* This legend is very widely known in Munster, where the people have many versions of it. The best-known one is told in the poem.

Her brow was like the snowy lustre shed
By lilies when the winter's dead and gone ;
Her form was like the ash-tree, young and light,
Blooming in beauty mid the mountains bright.

She stands beside her youthful Geraldine,
The beautiful, the generous, the brave,
The topmost branch of Desmond's princely line,
The bearer of the sharp unsullied glaive ;
Stately and straight as the young mountain pine
That towers above Glenara's tumbling wave,
And strong in battle as that rushing flood,
And fleet as wild deer of the vernal wood.

'Tis at Cnocfierna's foot—the enchanted hill
Where Donn, the fairy king, hath made his hall,
To men ofttimes invisible, but still
By wanderer sometimes seen at twilight fall,
Rearing its crystal battlements, until
They seem to prop the skies, and glittering all
With gold and snowy pearls, and diamonds bright,
That mock the pale stars on the brow of night !

And Eileen looks upon her Gerald now,
Then points unto the crimson west.—“ And see
How quick,” she says, “ upon Cnockfierna's brow
Yon cloud of blackness loometh !” Presently
A fierce wind shaketh every forest bough
Save the light branches of the rowan-tree*
That shadows o'er their trysting-place, and there
No light leaf trembles in the troublous air !

With lightnings in its front and thunder knell,
That black-faced cloud comes rolling down the steep,
And flings its sable darkness on the dell
Where stand the startled lovers ; wild winds sweep
Far through the groaning trees with frantic yell ;
Anon a lightning flash, and from the deep
Green bosom of the circling wood, a fawn,
Small, beautiful and white, treads o'er the lawn.

The black cloud fades—'tis bright and still again ;
The birds once more begin their evening tune,
But fear is in young Eileen's heart—she's fain
To seek her father's hall, for with the croon
Of the lone rill beside she hears full plain
Wierd fairy voices whispering wild, and soon
They're speeding to Kilmoodan's towers below,
The white fawn close behind them as they go !

It looks on him, as fast away he hies,
With melancholy fondness in its gaze ;
It looks on her with keen, malignant eyes,
As though each glance would kill her ; thro' the maze
Of woods Kilmoodan's turrets now arise
Upon their path, and in a gorgeous haze
Of golden vapour fades the fawn away
Beside the barbican so old and grey !

The warder from the barbican shouts down,
He sees Queen Cleena† walking o'er the glade,
With robe of heaven's own blue, and starry crown,
But nought the lover sees, nor aught the maid,
Save that light golden vapour :—crimson brown
The twilight steals o'er hill and forest shade,
As Gerald and his Eileen gain the hall
Where feast their smiling friends and clansmen tall.

Next morning rose in all its summer pride
Upon Kilmoodan's towers and leafy wood,
And love, that scorned all change of time and tide,
Swelled high in Gerald's heart, as there he stood

* The peasantry believe that the rowan-tree, or mountain ash, is endowed with great power against fairy spells.
† Cleena, the Fairy Queen of South Munster. She is believed by the peasantry to reside in Carrig Cleena, near Mallow.

Clasping the white hand of his beauteous bride
Before the glittering altar, and a flood
Of joy swept o'er them when the rite was done,
When both fond hearts in life and death were one !

And night came o'er the mountains high, and clear
The wild harps rang within Kilmoodan's hall,
Where o'er the dancers' heads gleamed sword and spear,
And targe and helm, and banner from the wall ;
And Gerald takes his Eileen's hand.—“ And here,”
In accents sweet and low, he says, “ though all
Dance now for joy, we too will dance for love !”
And down the floor in circlets light they move.

At once, as rose the clansmen's loud acclaim,
A dazzling light through loop and window shone,
That filled the broad hall like a flood of flame,
Blinding the dancers' eyes ; and when 'twas gone
Hearts throbbed and cheeks were blanched of knight and dame,

And stricken with wild fear, all woeful, wan,
Young Eileen stood, her loving bridegroom down,
Amid th' affrighted dancers, all alone !

Short time she stood, then fell and closed her eyes,
Like a white lily frost-blanching in the vale ;
And all that night of woe and wild surprise,
Wordless, and like the marble cold and pale,
She lay on her sad couch ; but when the skies
Blushed red with morn, she woke, and then a wail
Burst from her as she looked her chamber round
Among her maids, and yet no bridegroom found !

And many a doctor grave and man of lore
They brought to cure her mind, for she was mad—
Ah ! nought could each one do, but loud deplore,
As they looked on the bride, her doom so sad !
At length they brought Black Ronan of Kilmore,
For many a spell and wondrous cure he had,
That ancient seer, who drank his first draught full
His birthday morning from the raven's skull.‡

He looked on her. “ Thy Gerald is not dead !”
He cried aloud ; “ but 'neath Cleena's chain,
Where Carrig Cleena rears its mossy head,
And Avondhu pours down the woods amain,
He lingers in his grief, with hope still fed
Of seeing the green earth and thee again :—
Go there and ask for him, and well thou'lt prove
That nought but mighty death can conquer love !”

They would not let her go ; but one still noon
Of midnight, when deep slumber brooded o'er
Her father's hall, she donned her silken shoon
And garments snowy white, and by the shore
Of the lone forest rill, beneath the moon,
She stole away—ah ! many a mountain hoar
Lay 'tween home and her when dewy morn
Glittered like golden fire on tree and thorn !

With weary feet she crossed the forest glen,
With many a sigh toiled up the mountain slope,
And sat upon its ridge to weep, and then
Went down into the woods with wakening hope :—
Away by lone Glengartan's reedy fen,
And on, where Conail's mountains to the cope
Of heaven, towered upward through the purple air,
She rested in the burning noon, and there—

There laugh'd a sunny lakelet 'mid the trees,
Aye mirroring a ruin hoar and lone,
Like the blue bosom of those fabled seas
Where thunders never growl, nor wild winds moan.

‡ About this personage many legends are told in Munster. They say that should an infant get his first draught from the skull of a raven, he is sure ever afterwards to be endowed with prophetic powers.

Over its azure breast the wild duck flies;
The heron broods upon the shore-side stone,
And from its secret home at evening's gloom
The wary bittern sends its quivering boom.

A little bay beside her from the lake
Oped, by the mountain tempests aye unstirred;
The dun deer to its margin came to slake
Their thirst in the hot noon—no sound was heard
The deep and pleasant stillness there to break,
Save the sweet warbling of some lonely bird,
Borne with the summer breezes warm and bland,
Murmuring in music o'er the yellow sand.

Above her was a rugged, lonely pass,
Cleft through the splintered mountains like a gate—
A Titan gate—mass towered on ponderous mass
Of savage rock each side—all desolate,
Naked it yawned, save where scant gorse and grass
Spotted its torn ribs, or where elate
With life amid the stillness, one small rill
Shot down in gladness from the giant hill!

Now in that pass volcanic there appeared
A small light spiral cloud slow moving on
Unto young Eileen's path, and when it neared,
Beneath its whirling base, that snowy fawn
Again looked on her with a wild and wierd
Light in its bitter orbs of fiery tawn—
A threatening light, a keen, malignant ray,
That struck the poor bride's heart with strange dismay!

She placed her hand within her snowy vest
To still the fear with which that lorn heart strove,—
There found suspended on her faithful breast
A golden cross, her Gerald's gift of love,
And drew it quickly forth—"At his behest,
Whose holy sign this is, I charge thee move
From off my onward path!" fair Eileen said,
And at the word the white fawn shrieked and fled!

She kissed that blessed symbol—went her way,
With sinking heart o'er many a mile she wept,
And at the solemn close of that bright day
Within a woodman's hut she ate and slept—
Slept long and sound, until the yellow ray
Of morn gilt every hill-top; then she crept
Out from her heather couch, and shaped again
Her southern pathway through the forest glen.

At last by Cleena's crag she weeping stood
Within a fairy nook whose leafy bound
Left but one vista for day's sinking flood
To light its dreamy depth—there was a sound
Of a lone brooklet in a playful mood,
As if ten thousand golden bees had found
Amid the starry flowers their queen, and made
Their murmuring music in the slumb'ry shade.

Before her towered the crag all lightning split,
With battlemented front so stern and high,
As if the earth in some volcanic fit
Had burst and cast it upwards towards the sky;
And now while red its topmost spires were lit
By sunset, Eileen, with a mad shrill cry,
Called on the Queen her bridegroom to restore,
But echo only answered evermore!

She called and wept, and wept and called again,
On the hard-hearted Queen, till twilight fell
Upon each forest hill and drowsy plain,
Then sped she to a cave far down the dell
Where dwelt an aged hermit. "Moons may wane,
And years may vanish," said he 'gan to tell,
As she sat by his side, "ere thou'lt obtain
Thy bridegroom from Queen Cleena's magic chain!"

Nathless as each day rose she took her place
Before the crag, and called upon the Queen

Her bridegroom to restore, and her sad face
In the rude blasts soon lost its blooming sheen.
And autumn came—the winds began to chace
The leaves in the brown woods, and winter keen
Soon followed, still poor Eileen sat her there,
Loud calling for her love in wild despair!

At length of Hallowe'en the blood-red morn
With surly glare toiled up the eastern sky,
And soon the great wind blew its thundering horn
From the grey desolate hill-tops, and on high
The ragged clouds across the heavens were borne
Over Queen Cleena's crag, and many a cry
Rose to their stormy paths in wailing woe
From the poor bride who still knelt lorn below!

Ah! there she knelt before that fairy crag
With wet eyes, and beseeching arms outthrawn,
Yet answerless, each flinty spire and jag
Towered to the heavens, by wild winds beat and blown;
Ah! there she knelt, till like a tattered flag
The noon-day sky out-spread, and with loud groan
The western blast o'er the dark hills did urge
Mountains of rattling cloud from ocean's surge!

And loud the thunder bellowed, and aloud
Plashed down the roaring rain; yet love kept warm
Her heart, though like a wind-bent flower she bowed
In misery to the earth. At length the storm
With gathering twilight fell, and o'er a cloud
The moon showed, like a silver shield, her form,
And blue the heavens spread o'er with many a gleam
Of starlight on brown hill and thundering stream.

With downcast eyes she knelt; anon she raised
Their blue orbs, wet with many a tear, and bright
Before her the great crag, a palace, blazed
With towers, and domes, and halls of golden light—
Through the tall portal a long train that dazed
Her wondering eyes out came—bold squire and knight
And lady, and before them all most sheen,
With grace immortal, walked the Fairy Queen!

And, "Come, thou faithful maid!" Queen Cleena said,
"I've proved thy love and deathless constancy—
Thy love, that might thy dull dust of the dead
From its cold sleep awake.—Oh, come with me!"
She took young Eileen by the hand, and led
Into the great hall golden bright—"And see,"
Again she said, "the cause of thy sad moan,
Thy Gerald high upon yon glittering throne!"

She looked—her Gerald looked—but in his eye
She saw no sign of welcome warm and fond—
He knew her not—then rose a mighty cry
Of woe from the poor bride; anon her wand
Queen Cleena took, and with a mournful sigh
Of disappointed love and sad despond,
She laid it on his brow: from fairy charms
He woke, and clasped his young bride in his arms!

"Now choose thee," said the mournful Queen again,
"Tween earth and this immortal palace grand."
"I choose," Earl Gerald said, "my broad domain
And faithful bride!" Young Eileen took his hand
With joyous heart mid that resplendent train
Of dames and knights, and out from Fairyland
She led him through the golden palace door
Into the world of mortal life once more!

And many a horseman spurred when morning flashed
O'er the hills' ruby cones, by dale and down,
The news to tell, and many a weapon clashed
On gladsome shield from wall of tower and town—
From where old Ventry's sands are murmuring lashed
By the grey waves, to Gaultee's stony crown,
The harp rang in each joyful Desmond hall
For the brave bridegroom freed from fairy thrall!

RAYMOND DE BURGH;
OR, THE FORTUNES OF A STEPSON.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—A RUNAWAY AND A RESCUE.

THE rising sun was just gilding the eastern slope of the Cratloe hills, on the last day of April 18—, as Raymond de Burgh, the youthful heir of Shannon View, furtively crossed the last fence that separated his ancestral domain from the adjoining high road. The morning was a beautiful one, and the air seemed alive with melody. The lark, as he carolled forth his merriest lay, continued to ascend till his tiny wings refused to bear him further into the azure vault. Thrush and blackbird kept up a rival concert from the surrounding hedgerows; and even the little robin, perched on the highest spray of the hawthorn or holly, looked the very picture of content, as he plumed himself in the sunlight, varying his occupation by occasional snatches of song. Every thing seemed cheerful. Raymond alone looked sad. A fugitive from the home of his ancestors, his only thought was how to escape from a spot which, within the past few weeks, had become absolutely insupportable to him.

Taking the road leading to Limerick, his path lay along the crest of a steep hill, and partly by the verge of a beautiful glen, whose sides were thickly set with brushwood, completely screening the mountain stream that flowed beneath. A quarter of an hour's walk brought him to the little parish chapel. A thousand times he had passed it, without even once thinking of its existence; but now that he was about bidding it and its little graveyard farewell, he found it impossible to pass it by without a parting visit. Crossing the stile, he stood beneath the old sycamore, where, Sunday after Sunday, when a child, he used to await the coming of Father Magrath. He could even see the smoke now curling through the trees that surrounded his little cottage, and he would gladly bid him, at least, farewell. But this could not be. Secret and unobstructed flight, he felt, was his sole means of escaping from Shannon View. Passing through the ruined porch of the edifice once used for worship by those on whose dust he now trod, he stood before the family vault of the Burghs. There lay the ashes of his mother, snatched away from him just as he was beginning to value her worth—and there too, but one short month since, they had deposited the remains of his father. All he loved best lay there, heedless of his anguish; and, in the paroxysm of his grief, he would have given worlds to be laid beside them. Falling on his knees he prayed long and fervently—how long he knew not, but he was at length warned that it was time to depart, by the ringing of the workmen's bell in the manor farm-yard. His prayer completely calmed him; and hastily plucking a few leaves of sweet brier from his parents' grave, he quitted the hallowed spot, nor did he slacken his pace till he reached the rise of the hill whence he used to catch the first glimpse of Shannon View, on his return from school each vacation.

Resting his little bundle on the bank of heather that skirted the mountain road, he turned round for a last

look at home. He could see the tall gables of the family mansion peering through the elms with every branch of which he was familiar, for he had climbed every one of them a dozen times at least. Behind stood the orchard, and beyond that again ran the sparkling stream that supplied the pond on the lawn. He could even discern his foster-brother and old playmate Senan Dillon driving his lowing charge to the dairy, and even fancied he could hear him whistling his favourite melody, the *Suisheen Bawn*. All seemed to beckon him back. But the wrongs he had lately suffered came back still more powerfully upon him, and, dashing away a tear, he took up his little bundle once more, and resumed his journey, but with a heart that, despite all his assumed firmness, was well nigh breaking.

His rapid pace soon brought him beyond all chance of recognition; and, ere long, he found himself in the midst of a group of strangers who, like himself, were bound for the city. But they were merry-makers—light-hearted, joyous peasants decked out in their holiday garb, and bent on enjoying all the festivities of May Eve round "the Garland" in Garryowen. Their kindly "God save you, sir!" encouraged Raymond to join them; and in their company he accordingly trudged along, till they reached the "Red Gate" or entrance to the Inn where they usually regaled themselves, whenever business or pleasure brought them to town. Here Raymond would have fain bidden them good morning, but there was no resisting their kind-hearted importunity to join them at breakfast. Had he persisted in declining, his refusal would have been set down to pride; so he consented to make one amongst them at the meal for which, in reality, he felt but little relish.

The Hostelry into which he was now ushered was a large, unshapely building, or rather medley of buildings, situated in the liberties, close to "the Mayor's stone" or municipal boundary on the Thomond side of the river. Directly over the principal entrance swung a cumbrous sign-board, bearing an antique effigy once designated Sarsfield, but lately christened Lord Cornwallis by the amateur artist or "handy man" commissioned to "refresh it," and inscribe the name and occupation of the proprietress,—she was a widow—thereon. Beneath Lord Cornwallis, the aforesaid loyal artist, who was a pensioner, and had served in India, but knew little of Sarsfield, had furthermore emblazoned, in most attractive yellow ochre, the words "Entertainment for Man and Horse." Whatever the amount of patronage bestowed on the establishment by the former class of wayfarers might be, the latter, at all events, seemed to patronise it rather extensively, for Raymond had to edge his way through at least a score quadrupeds, ere he reached the door to whose posts they were secured while quietly munching their corn, in ruminative mood, from the surrounding troughs.

Rapping loudly and lustily, with his bare knuckles, on the counter, the spokesman of the party to which our hero had attached himself summoned the landlady, and on Mistress Hourigan, a rosy, hospitable looking *Bea-a-Tigh** presenting herself, ordered breakfast in "the tap

* Anglice, *canathée*—housewife.

room." With a celerity that would fling utter discredit on any one rash enough to assert, that Irish innkeepers are slow in attending to the wants of their guests, Biddy Grimes, Mrs. Hourigan's maid of all work, appeared laden with a monster tray covered with "bricks" of bread, foaming tankards of Johnny Connell's ale, and, to crown all, a dish of salt rashers cut down from the fitch, when the meal was ordered, and fried with an adequate quantity of blue duck eggs, while Biddy was laying the "tay things." Never before did Raymond behold such motley fare on a breakfast board. But "*chacun a son gout*," said he to himself. His companions were content with it, and it even did him good to see them gulp it down with such keen relish, while, for his own part, he did his best to imitate them. When the repast was at length brought to a conclusion, Raymond called for the bill, intending to pay for all out of the little stock of money he possessed; but here again he was forced to yield to his companions, each of whom insisted that he himself should "settle" for the meal; while all agreed that whoever "paid the reckoning," the stranger should not.

This little incident, trifling as it was, inspired our young friend with hope; for it taught him that there were still warm hearts, even for a stranger, in a world generally reputed so cold, and it was not without a feeling of regret he, at last, bade his chance companions farewell.

Crossing Thomond bridge he found himself in the English town, and, without any fixed notion as to where he was going, took the direction of Nicholas street. As he went along, blazing tar-barrels and gaily decked maypoles, accompanied by bands of amateurs playing Garryowen, Patrick's Day, or the Limerick Lasses, met his eye in every direction, whilst old "Mary's steeple" sent forth its blithest peals, and rival ballad singers strained nerve and lung to sing each other down, at street corners. But by far the most attractive object that yet met his eye was a recruiting party drawn up at the head of Quay lane. Mingling with the crowd, he listened for some time, to the squat little figure, decked out in all the paraphernalia of flying ribbons, purple sash, and glittering sword, that stood haranguing the mass of gaping rustics by whom he was surrounded. This was the sergeant of the party; and most eloquently did he pourtray the twenty pounds' bounty, the horse and sword, fine sights in foreign parts, and gentleman's life now within reach of every man who being "five foot eight in his stocking vamps, was willing and able to serve his Majesty." More than once Raymond was on the point of stepping forward, as he saw each successive countryman close his hand on the proffered shilling, and pin the variegated cockade to his "caroline." Nor did he escape the eye of the wily sergeant, who, struck with his appearance, now approached, and asked him if he wished to wear a pair of gold epaulettes some fine day, at the same time reaching him the shilling, and promising to put him on the list of the "light bobs," without a day's drill. Unused to be thus publicly accosted, Raymond blushed scarlet, the more so, as he saw the

gaze of every bystander now rivetted upon him. In his confusion, he would have unquestionably accepted the offered coin, but for the sudden interference of a portly-looking matron, who, with arms akimbo, had been for some time past standing in scornful silence among the spectators.

Balancing more securely in its horizontal position a large tub of Killaloe eels, which seemed to serve her for head-gear—at least none other was visible—she grasped him by the collar, and with a shove that would have imparted motion to a three-decker, bade him "be off about his business, an' not desert the mother that reared him, as her own unlucky divarber of a son had done." Then, turning on the sergeant, she let fly at him as choice a volley of invective as ever escaped the lips of Pill lane or Billingsgate beldam, not to speak at all of her sister craftswomen of the treaty-riven city, equally famed for their eloquence.

Having finished her exordium, which consisted of all the curses and opprobrious epithets in her well-stocked vocabulary, she proceeded to ask the "little beer barrel," the "spillicated vagabone," "the mealy-monthed *Sprissawn*," why he didn't go abroad himself, an' airn all he promised by clappin' a pair of han'cuffs on Boney?

"Why, dhin, bad look to yeer consait!" continued the exasperated vender of fresh eels—"what a chance ye have of takin' Boney pris'ner! Be me soukins, ye won't lave Boney alone till he makes some o' ye sup sorrow—gould appewlets, *inagh*! How aisy you have um? Yerrah! go home, honest men, an' lave the dirty little *Luragadhawn* go hang himself—an' 'tis too good Gallows Green is for the likes of him an his aiquils. Gould appewlets, how are ye!"

Having thus relieved her feelings, additionally ruffled by the recollection of her own "little boy" who had been "kidnapped by the sejers, one day that he had a little dhrop o' liquor taken," the good woman departed, not however without divers gestures of her clenched hand, which elocutionists would possibly designate the visible expression of threat. As for the sergeant, poor man, he seemed thunder stricken; and so befouled and bespattered was he in the eyes of the spectators by the mire of Biddy Hanly, *alias* Lady Clare's, eloquence, that one—a judge in those matters—remarked to his neighbour that "a clane dog wouldn't lick him," while, as if in mockery, the stentorian voice of Mrs. Hanly herself was distinctly heard calling out, "fine lee-airge fre-esh eels! fine lairge eels!" fully three streets off, and the junior members of the crowd amused themselves, as they dispersed, by most disloyally chanting a song (suggested no doubt by the late allusion to the Emperor Napoleon,) the burden of which was—

"Oh! dhin Boney—he is comin',
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Boney—he is comin',
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Boney—he is comin',
For I hear his throops a dhrummin',
An' the Orange must be runnin',
Says the Shan Van Vocht."

During the row got up in his behalf by his fair friend, Raymond, glad to escape the notice of the crowd, had retired without observation, and continued his way down Mary street. Having passed Bael's bridge, he entered the Irish town, then the principal business part of the city. But, again changing his course, he directed his steps towards the quays, with the intention of seeking a berth in some one of the many vessels by which, in those ante-steam days, the port of Limerick was generally crowded. As he proceeded through Water-gate and Mardyke, his ear caught the sound of a fife and drum; and as he drew nearer the spot whence he thought the sounds proceeded, he could perceive that the musicians seemed bent on executing the Boyne Water, despite all opposition—and it was not small—on the part of their instruments. Fearing the music might be that of the recruiting party he had so recently escaped, he determined, if possible, to avoid a second rencontre, and to this end, hastily entered the custom-house yard, which fortunately happened to be open. On passing the gate, however, he discovered that he was mistaken in his apprehensions—the musical party, which was in possession before him, being no other than the band of Colonel Hayraker's invincibles. The little squad now before him, unpretending though it might seem to his unmilitary eye, was nevertheless a squad of heroes, fresh, as it were, from the world-famed and still recent victory of Coloony, and rich no doubt in the loot thereof! Some said they had even distinguished themselves, by the rapidity of their movements in the military competition known as the "Races of Castlebar." But of this we are not certain. At all events, the red-faced, placid little man now in command was their captain, and by his men—the best judges no doubt—reputed a hero.

It was a general review day with the corps, and shuttles and shoe-lasts were abandoned for the time, and nothing thought of but death or glory. Some, in the excess of their loyalty, had evidently forgotten their morning ablutions, whilst others, from force of habit or inadvertence, no doubt, had their shakos enveloped in clouds of tobacco smoke. Owing to their mutual good fellowship, and the readiness with which each felt disposed to give precedence to his neighbour, their gallant leader found some difficulty at first, in bringing them to a straight line. This, however, he ultimately effected with true military precision, by ordering them to march quick step to the verge of the quay, and then wheel right about face. Having accomplished this manœuvre, and several others of a similar character worthy only of a victor of Coloony, he proudly waved his sword, and called upon any of his admiring friends to point him out, if he could, a more effective or better disciplined corps in his Majesty's service. With three cheers for "the glorious, pious and immortal memory," our good king George, and their gallant Captain Pinch, the warriors piled their arms, and proceeded to the neighbouring ale-houses to spend the earnings of the day's parade, leaving Raymond in quiet possession of the parade ground and his own reflections.

Houseless and friendless though he was, he could not repress a smile at the animated exhibition of loyalty he had just witnessed. The thought, too, of the abrupt manner in which his own aspirations after military glory had been cut short, tended not a little to his amusement. In this mood he walked along the quays admiring the various craft that met his gaze. Some were of considerable tonnage, many of them emigrant vessels bound for Canada. But there was no chance for him there. He had not half money enough to secure even the cheapest berth. Others were colliers; but their dark hulls and dingy-looking canvass seemed like mourning to poor Raymond—and he passed on. At length a very pretty-looking schooner met his eye. Every thing seemed trim and tant about her. Her very name, the *Amazade*, he thought beautiful, perhaps because it was foreign and he could not understand it. The Irish are very fond of foreigners. He could not pass her; but taking his stand beside the gangway, remained admiring her, till accosted by the skipper, who, with folded arms, leant over the bulwark in full enjoyment of a well-filled meerschaum. Having briefly stated his case, in reply to the captain's queries, that kind-hearted individual, touched by his story, offered him a berth, and informed him that he was to sail for Oporto with the evening's tide. Raymond embraced his offer with many thanks, the more readily as he was now in a fair way of seeing his uncle and sister—an event which he had not the slightest hope of so quickly realizing, when he started from home that morning. Evening at length came, and ere the last rays of the setting sun had faded in the west, Raymond was slowly sailing down the Shannon, bound for Portugal. The good skipper seeing that he was fatigued, showed him his hammock, and insisted on his turning in after supper. Nor was he long in his new couch ere he fell into a sound slumber, and dreamt pleasantly of Shannon View, and his old friend Senan Dillon; and while we leave him to the enjoyment of his repose, we will proceed to lay before our reader a brief sketch of his birth and family connexions.

CHAPTER II.—THE DE BURGH FAMILY.

RAYMOND, the principal personage in our narrative, was the eldest son of Walter de Burgh, the representative of an ancient family, which had often undergone persecution and exile rather than compromise either faith or fatherland. One of his ancestors had even suffered death at Galway and another at Limerick, in sustinment of their hereditary principles. His mother was likewise of an ancient Hiberno-Norman family; and, in early life, had been sent with her brother to Spain to be educated. Here it was that she first met Raymond's father, then travelling with his tutor, after the completion of his studies at St. Omer's. An acquaintance was formed between them, a mutual liking sprang up, and shortly after their return to Ireland, the young people were married. Her brother, disappointed at the result of the rising in "98," returned to Spain, and taking orders, was appointed to a benefice in Madrid.

For several years after their marriage, Walter de

Burgh and his lady led a life of almost uninterrupted happiness, their sole care being the early training of their only surviving child Raymond, and the comfort and prosperity of their tenantry. But this happiness could not last always. A trifling accident which occurred to her husband, by the bursting of his fowling-piece, so alarmed Mrs. de Burgh, that a premature confinement was the result, and she only lived to bid him and her darling Raymond farewell, leaving them, in her place, a little daughter whom she charged them to love for her sake. Distraction is but a feeble epithet when applied to the state of mind into which the death of his wife threw Walter de Burgh: and even little Raymond, though scarcely five years old at the time, cried himself sick when his dear mamma refused to speak, or even look at him.

For over a year after this sad event, the stranger assisting at mass, in the little mountain chapel that looked down on Shannon View, could not fail to remark the pale, handsome-looking gentleman in deep mourning who led a little boy, in similar attire, first to the large family pew of which they were the sole occupants, and, after mass, into the old ruin at the back of the chapel, where both knelt, and with uncovered heads—no matter how severe the weather—recited a short prayer, before returning home. This was Walter de Burgh and his son Raymond. Ever since the death of his young wife his health was fast declining. Shunning all society, he moved along, the mere shadow of what he was. He could not even bear to see his lovely little daughter, whom he regarded as the cause of the death of one still dearer. His only consolation—and it was a melancholy, destructive one—seemed to consist in visiting his wife's grave, accompanied by his little son. All his friends and acquaintances grew alarmed, feeling that such a state of things could not continue, without serious detriment to his health. His physician prescribed society and immediate change of scene; whilst his brother-in-law, the Canon de Lacy, earnestly entreated him, in weekly letters from Madrid, to cease fretting for poor Mary, who was in heaven, and to think only of the preservation of his health for the sake of their common children.

Unable any longer to resist such repeated importunities, he at length consented to place Raymond at a boarding-school presided over by a worthy ecclesiastic in Killarney, and consigning his little daughter Emily to the care of her nurse, set out for Baden-Baden. The excitement of travel, and the many varieties of scenery and manners, together with the lively conversation of the travelling companions he met with on the continent, produced a most salutary change in his health. But it only continued till he reached his destination, when he again sank into his wonted lethargy.

Shortly after his arrival in Baden-Baden, the remaining apartments of the little chateau in which he lodged were taken possession of by the widow of a Scotch officer and her two daughters, Margaret and Helen Frazer. The latter was a mild, blue-eyed girl of nineteen, fast sinking into an early grave, though she herself thought

but little of the slight cough that so alarmed her friends. The former, about four years older, was quite different both in appearance and manner. With tresses dark as the wing of the Highland eagle, and features that would be absolutely handsome were they somewhat more feminine, she stood a fitting representative of the stern McLeods, from whose warlike house her mother was descended. The old lady herself was a most amiable being. Grief for the loss of her husband, and the fond anxiety with which she watched over the declining health of her favourite daughter, threw an air of quiet melancholy over her features that made her an object of interest and pity to all. Living in the same house, frequenting the same spa, walking on the same promenade, Mr. de Burgh and the Frazers could not but become acquainted. And he was the less unwilling to form such an acquaintance, as they were quiet, retiring people, with few visitors, just like himself. He soon became their constant companion, whenever the mildness of the weather permitted Helen to seek a little out-door recreation, and, in the evening, he was occasionally induced by Mrs. Frazer to join them at the tea-table. Forgetting, for the moment, his own affliction, he sought but to cheer and console his interesting neighbours. Summer passed away, and the bitter blast of October blew over the Hohen Wold, and poor Helen Frazer bowed her head before it, and died. In her last moments, she committed her mother and sister to the protection of the warm-hearted Irishman, who had always been so kind to her; and faithfully did he promise to attend to her dying request. Baden-Baden became now too lonely a residence for poor Mrs. Frazer, and she accordingly resolved to leave it. Faithful to his engagement, De Burgh accompanied them, through Belgium, as far as Ostend. Here they were to part. To-morrow the Frazers were to embark for Scotland, but he had now become so accustomed to their society, had formed such a close intimacy with them, that he could not endure the notion of a final separation. Yet what was to be done? He could not think of asking two females to Ireland; nor could they press him to accompany them farther, as they were going direct to Leith to live in future with a wealthy relative on whose bounty they were, to a great extent, dependent. But one resource remained. He proposed for Miss Frazer, was accepted, and, a week later, Raymond had a stepmother on her way to Ireland.

For a year or more after their arrival in Shannon View, De Burgh and his new wife lived in apparent happiness. Still, their marriage originated rather in mutual selfishness than any real affection. He could never forget the mild and gentle disposition of his first wife, so totally different from the proud and almost masculine temperament of his second; and she, on her part, had merely married him because she knew him to be rich. She never really loved him, and she even felt that he always preferred her deceased sister to herself, as indeed all did who were acquainted with both. She felt that he married her solely because he could not bear up against the sorrow that preyed on him without her mother's society, and consequently her own.

The birth of a son completed her ascendancy, and with this event commenced the future misery of Walter de Burgh. Nothing was now spoken of but Master Ulick, for so the boy was called. Little Emily, indeed, was carefully attended to, as long as Mrs. Frazer lived, but death deprived her of that good lady's care, about two years after her arrival in Ireland. Raymond was now rarely permitted to return from school; and when, at the general vacation, all the boys left, and he too came home, he met with nothing but coldness and oftentimes harshness, whenever he happened in any way to cross the temper of his petted and wayward brother. His only friends now were his old nurse, his foster-brother, and the good clergyman to whom we have already alluded. Often would he steal away of an evening by himself—for his papa no longer accompanied him—and sit for hours weeping by his mother's grave. Once only since her death had he any lengthened duration of happiness, and that was on the occasion of a visit paid them by his uncle the canon. But its termination only brought him renewed sorrow; for he lost by it not only his new friend, but also his little playmate Emily, who accompanied her uncle to Spain, to be brought up in the convent in which her mother had been educated.

Matters continued pretty much in the state we have just described till the period at which our narrative opens, when Raymond was suddenly summoned from school to accompany his father's remains to the tomb. The summons was the death-blow to all his hopes of happiness. He was going to see his mother's grave opened, and the remains of all he loved best deposited beside her. It is needless to dwell on the funeral—sufficient to state that, but for the kindness of the good priest, Raymond would have most probably followed his parent to the grave. For days he refused all food or rest; and it was only when removed to the vicarage he seemed to recover his reason. But his sorrows did not end here. His father was scarcely a week in the tomb when he began to feel the harshness of his stepmother and her spoiled son. He was not even allowed a suit of mourning, but had to content himself with a simple crape band, while his younger brother was carefully provided with everything requisite on such occasions. Nor was this all. He was shortly reminded that it was time for him to return to school, and finish his quarter before being put to business. Business! The heir of the De Burghs put to business! This and a thousand similar annoyances and unkind acts on the part of his stepmother, at length drove his patience beyond further endurance, and urged him to the step we have seen him take in the preceding chapter.

CHAPTER III.—A VOYAGE TO OPORTO.

We left Raymond soundly sleeping on board the *Amazade*, when we digressed for the purpose of acquainting our reader with the cause of his being there. At an early hour next morning he was awakened by a heavy tramping directly over his head. Unaccustomed to such strange sounds, he started up, and was almost

precipitated from his coffin-like couch, which commenced to swing to and fro, like a cradle, as its centre of gravity and that of its occupant became more elevated. Unconscious for the moment of where he was, he looked anxiously round; but his horizon was bounded on all sides by the ship's timbers, scarcely six feet removed from him in any direction. As he became more fully awake, the light ripple at the prow, and the two circular pieces of glass over his head, told him where he was. The tramp of footsteps still continued, and it was now accompanied by a loud chorus of rich voices that fell by no means unpleasantly on his ear. Carefully descending from his vibrating couch, he performed his toilet as best he could, and hastened on deck anxious to see where the vessel now was. New grief for Raymond! She had been only able to proceed as far as Grass Island with the evening's tide, and lay there at anchor during the night. The noise which had awakened him proceeded from the sailors, who, hand-spike in hand, were merrily tramping round the capstan, and had just brought the ship right over her anchor, as he reached the deck. In a few minutes more it was made fast at the bow, and the little schooner was again under way. Light figures now sprang into the shrouds, and in less than a quarter of an hour every sail was set; and the *Amazade*, in her snowy suit of canvass, looked graceful as a bride on her wedding morning—at least so thought Raymond.

His eye, however, no sooner turned from her graceful drapery to the shore, than all his sadness of yesterday returned. Directly before him—and all together as in a picture—lay every scene of his boyhood. They had passed Cratloe wood; still he could discern some of its tall pines; and fancy led him to imagine that they were nodding towards him, it might be a farewell or it might be a warning. Bunnary river, that flowed through the very pond in his own lawn, was straight opposite him; and he could also plainly see Rosmaher and Castlecrine, and from a point of view whence he had never before seen them. Involuntarily he turned to the opposite shore of the Shannon, as if to contrast it with his favourite Clare. But Tervoe and Carrigogunnell, and even the silvery Maig, with its windings all the way to Adare, appeared common place and uninteresting, when compared with those sweet spots endeared to him by a thousand fond yet nameless associations. The hot tear came to his eye, and one word from a familiar voice would have sent it and a thousand others chasing each other down his cheek. No such voice, however, was on board the *Amazade*, though one just at that moment sung out pretty lustily in his ear,

"Will em leabe de cap'n all de day widout him breakfast. Eh, Massa Raymun, dat him name?" and his interrogator grinned a note of interrogation with a double row of ivory visible almost from ear to ear.

The speaker was an aged negro clad in canvass that had once been white, with a green tarpauling hat, whose long peak extended to a considerable distance down his back, not sufficiently far, however, to conceal the two lengthened cues of well-greased, platted hair that pro-

jected from beneath it. He was, furthermore, decorated with a massive pair of gold earrings, which considerably elongated the hearing organs of the wearer.

Without waiting for a reply to the interrogatory thus so unceremoniously put, the old cook, for such he was, snatched up a frying-pan which he had been for some time previously engaged in scouring, and with it huddled off to the galley. Raymond followed as quickly as he could, and on entering the culinary sanctum, had his olfactories regaled with such a miscellaneous compound of fish, flesh, oil, garlic and tobacco, as to a novice formed anything but an agreeable *tout ensemble*. His first thought was to start back, and seek a few breaths of fresh air on deck; but he wisely restrained himself, as such a breach of discipline, on the part of a subaltern, would have undoubtedly evoked the wrath of old Domingo. After a few growls having reference to the partiality of some parties for their hammock, his sable friend presented Raymond with a smart canvass jacket something whiter than his own, a pair of light slippers, and a Panama chip hat, and thus arrayed, dismissed him to prepare the master's meal in the after cabin.

"And markee, Massa Raymun, mind ye don't stain de brass ob de companion way. 'Tis no easy brightening it, so hab a care don't touch it," added his careful instructor—a counsel which the party addressed promised faithfully to follow.

Breakfast over in the cabin, Raymond returned to the galley, where Domingo had their own morning refectory already prepared. It consisted of biscuit and a kind of soup, of which Domingo piqued himself on being the inventor and sole manufacturer—a horrid mixture of barley-water, vinegar, oil and cayenne pepper, highly flavoured with his favorite ingredient, garlic.

"Why don't em drink him soup?" was his inquiry of astonishment on seeing Raymond's plate of that most delectable beverage untasted. "Don't spare it, we hab plenty," he added, at the same time pouring in another measure with the large spoon which he had been using in gulping down his own portion.

Raymond's only excuse, and it was a true one, was, that being as yet unaccustomed to such dainty fare, he feared it might disagree with him. This encomium on his favourite dish, so flattering to Domingo's professional skill, quite conciliated him; and with occasional exclamations of pity for the poor Irish who could not afford to use *gaspacho*, he prepared a cup of chocolate for his companion. Having fully satisfied his own appetite by a double allowance of his fragrant beverage, Domingo brought the meal to a close by cutting off about an inch and a half of cavendish from an eighteen-inch bar which he took from a candle-box, and, having carefully deposited the severed portion between his teeth, offered a similar plug to his new acquaintance. Here again Raymond was obliged to fall back on his inexperience in such matters, as an excuse for not being able to enjoy the luxury of a quid.

Meanwhile the little vessel was holding steadily on her course. As they passed "the race," between Tarbert and the beautiful bay of Clonderlaw, Raymond found his footing rather insecure, the deck seeming to him as unsteady as if tracing parallels with the now growing swell of the Atlantic. By noon they were again at anchor in Scatterry roads, with scores of other vessels, some wind-bound, others put in by stress of weather, or waiting for provisions from shore. Before him lay the round tower, and ruined churches, and "blessed well" of Inniscathy, and the picturesque little town of Kilrush; whilst on the opposite shore he could plainly discern the ruins of Carrigafoyle Castle and Lislaghlin Abbey, and farther still to the eastward, the island of Findina or Foynes, with Kuoce Patrick and its ancient temple rising high above all. The scene looked lovely in his eyes on that bright May day. It was the first time he beheld it, and he made up his mind that not even in sunny Spain should any other obliterate it from his loving memory.

With the fall of the evening tide, they again weighed anchor, and the little vessel seemed to fly before the shoals of porpoises that rolled along in her wake, as she passed Bael-Bar and Ballybunnian. The lights were just visible at Tarbert, Kilcredane, and Loop Head, as they dropped their pilot, and saw him fall astern, wishing them a thousand safe voyages, and when the moon rose, they had Brandon Head on their port bow, and were standing fair before the wind for the Basket Sound.

Nothing particular occurred during the voyage save the loss of a jib and foresail, and poor Raymond's appetite in the Bay of Biscay. Oh, how he did long for terra-firma once more, as he lay writhing in his hammock, his ears assailed by the whistling of the wind through the rigging, and his nose by the nauseous odour of Domingo's ever-tormenting garlic soup—the panacea of all diseases, especially sea-sickness, in that worthy philanthropist's estimation. At length the shores of Galicia hove in sight. Finisterre was descried at day-break; the headlands of Portugal next appeared at intervals during the day, and by sundown the Amazado dropped anchor in the Douro. With what delight Raymond hailed the termination of his voyage! He was now safely within sight of shore, and he mentally vowed an eternal farewell to Domingo and his *gaspacho*. The air was full of fragrance. Strange notes too, fell upon his ear from neighbouring cork and olive groves. The very fish seemed clothed in gold, as they swam round the vessel. Every thing formed a pleasing contrast to the close-heated galley over which Domingo presided. At last he landed, and, as he passed through the streets of Oporto, its shops and marts, and motley-clad bypassers, formed as attractive objects to him, as the scenes of a diorama or pantomime to a sight-loving schoolboy just let loose for the holidays.

(To be concluded in our next.)

NOTES LOVANIENSES.

The Monastery of Multifernan.

Origin of the Name—Foundation of the Monastery—The Delamers—The Nugents of Delvin and Donore—The Monastery Plundered and Burnt by the English—The Friars Imprisoned in the Castle of Ballimore—Escape of Father Mooney—Cruelties perpetrated on the Prisoners—Richard Brady, Bishop of Kilmore—Re-establishment of the Friars in Multifernan—Notice of distinguished Members of the Community.

"It will afford me great pleasure," said Father Mooney to his colleague, "to give you an ample account of the vicissitudes of our once noble convent of Multifernan: for, indeed, of all our Irish houses there is not one, that of Donegal excepted, with whose history I am better acquainted. And how could it be otherwise? it was in Multifernan I made my noviciate, and 'twas there I hoped to have made my religious profession, till—"

"But Father," interrupted Purcell, "I thought you commenced your monastic life in the convent of Donegal."

"No, dear friend; 'twas in Donegal I renounced the world, abandoning sword and matchlock; and no sooner did I avow my intention of devoting myself to the service of God and St. Francis, than our good provincial—peace to his soul—sent me to Multifernan, to enter on my noviciate. I was then in my twenty-fourth year, strong and active, inured to hardships and privations, having served some years under the united banners of O'Neill and O'Donnell, in their campaigns against Elizabeth's choicest generals. I too had my share of martial glory, for I may say, without any idle self-laudation, that I bore myself as it became a true soldier on many a battle-field, from Clontibret to the Yellow-Ford, where the clans of Tirone and Tyrconnell routed the English army under Marshal Bagnall. Reminiscences such as these may not beseem a poor disciple of St. Francis, so let me rather proceed to satisfy your enquiries concerning the rise and fall of the monastery of Multifernan.

"I need hardly observe that that venerable house, now, alas, a charred and mouldering mass of ruins, stands hard by the river Gain, in the county of Westmeath. Our annals, as well as the traditions of the locality, date its erection in the year 1306, when William Delamer, whose ancestor, Herbert, came to Ireland in the days of Henry II., built the church and convent to the honour of God, and his chosen patron, St. Francis. As to the meaning of the word Multifernan, it may not be amiss to inform you, that it signifies *Fearnan's Mill*; for it appears that an Irish family of that name owned the territory, and had a mill on the Gain, long before the Delamers,—or as they were subsequently styled, in the Irish vernacular *MacHerberts*—possessed a single rood in the county of Westmeath. The appellation "*Montis Fernandi*," given to the monastery and village, is doubtless a euphonious latinizing of the primitive Celtic word, and must have been invented by the first guardian of the convent, in his correspondence with the general of our order in Italy.

The site which Delamer selected for this monastery was admirably suited to the contemplative life of its inmates; for it was in low ground, at a considerable distance from the village, away from frequented thoroughfares, and in the vicinity of the lake of Derreghvera, through which the silvery Inny flows to join the Shannon. In fact there is only one road by which the place can be approached—the great highway leading from Mullingar to Longford. The monastery itself was very spacious, capable of affording accommodation to a large number of friars, having all requisite appurtenances, such as cloisters, refectory, dormitory, guest-house, library and chapter-room. The church, which is still surmounted by a graceful belfry, was of exquisite architecture, and amply furnished with all requirements for its sacred purposes. The groined ceilings, panelled choir, and richly carved altars, bore ample testimony to the devotion of the lordly Delamer and his posterity, who for many centuries were our unfailing benefactors; and, indeed, I may justly style them benefactors, for not satisfied with building the church and convent, they endowed the latter with many acres of rich land, and empowered our friars to erect mills and weirs on the Gain. Thus did the Delamers provide for the wants of the community, and in return for such bountiful munificence, the friars of Multifernan prayed, as in duty bound, for the souls of their illustrious patrons, preserved their tombs from decay, and took special care to guard against all accident the beautiful south-eastern window of the church, once all ablaze with their armorial cognizance.

"In progress of time, however, the lands which Delamer won by the sword, lapsed to the no less illustrious family of the Nugents, barons of Delvin, who like their predecessors proved themselves constant benefactors and patrons of the friars of Multifernan. How many instances could I not give you of the fostering protection which the Nugents bestowed on that convent? At the time when Henry VIII. decreed the dissolution of the Irish monasteries—especially those standing in the English pale—Multifernan, with all its appurtenances, was granted to Edward Field, Patrick Clynch and Philip Penney, at a fine of eighty pounds, and the annual rent of four shillings Irish. Yet notwithstanding this sacrilegious alienation of our venerable house, the friars were not disturbed, for owing to the interposition of the barons of Delvin, they still continued to retain possession of the church and monastery. In fact, the Nugents were so devoted to our order, that they always contrived to purchase the monastery and church from the grantees and assignees, as they were styled, who cared far more for a round sum of money than they did for the dispersion of a poor community, or the few acres which they cultivated. The fidelity of the Nugents to the English government in the reign of Elizabeth, enabled them to extend protection to the inmates of Multifernan; and although the monastery was frequently garrisoned by English troops, during the war between O'Neill and that queen, it sustained little or no injury from such visitors. Seven years before Elizabeth's decease, James Nugent of Donore died,

seized in fee of the manor of Multifernan; and in the succeeding reign, his son Richard purchased the monastery from Alderman Jans of Dublin, to whom it was granted by James the First. This Richard, who died in 1615, and was buried in the ancestral tomb in Multifernan, was a great benefactor of our order, for not satisfied with repairing the church and monastery, he bestowed additional grants of land, and several costly pieces of altar plate, on our community. His son Andrew, who succeeded him, was a worthy representative of a sire whose memory shall never perish, if my poor words can transmit it to posterity.

"Let me now relate to you what I myself witnessed during my noviciate in Multifernan. In the October of 1601, a strong detachment of English soldiers, commanded by Francis Shane, was sent from Dublin by Charles Blount,* the then deputy, with instructions to pillage the monastery, and seize the friars. On their march, and within bowshot of the convent, they arrested Richard Brady, bishop of Kilmore (a member of our order), Father John Gray, the provincial, Father James Hayn, and Bernard Moriarty, dean of Ardagh. On entering the convent they seized Father Nehemias Gray, the guardian, together with five or six other members of the brotherhood; it was then dark night, and we were returning from the church to our cells, when we found ourselves in the hands of the soldiers. In the confusion some of the friars escaped out of the convent, and sought refuge in the neighbouring woods. As for the bishop, Shane sent him and some others under escort to the castle of Ballimore on Loughshodie, some twelve miles south-west of Mullingar, while I, the guardian, and a few other members of the community, were detained prisoners in the monastery. Thus were we kept for two days. Shane, indeed, hoped to light on some rich treasure in our poor house, but he was disappointed, for after searching the entire edifice, he could find nothing save a goodly store of provisions, which was sent to the monastery by the nobility and gentry, who were wont to come thither on the feast of St. Francis, then nigh at hand. This was an old usage in that place, as there were no inns in the neighbourhood. In the meantime, while the soldiers were making merry on the good cheer, never intended for them, I contrived to effect the escape of the guardian and some others, and, indeed, I too might have got off, had I so willed it, but as it was within two days of the time appointed for making my religious profession, I preferred remaining in custody, knowing right well that Shane would send me to the castle on Loughshodie where the provincial was confined. On the expiration of the second day Shane ordered me and a lay-brother out of the convent, and setting us on horses, sent us prisoners to Ballimore. Alas! I never will forget the horrors of that day, for we had gone hardly a mile, when Shane came galloping up and commanding us to halt, directed our attention to a mass of fire and smoke clearly visible in the distance, exclaiming at the same time with fiendish

malevolence; "Vile poltroons, see how I have burnt your monastery to the ground." Thus on the third of October, 1601, did that inhuman monster give our venerable house of Multifernan to the flames.

"With a heavy heart we held on our way to the castle of Ballimore; and as we rode along, Shane, who did not venture to do me personal harm, waxing jocose, began to banter me about the habit I wore. "You," said he, "have been a soldier, and you ought to be ashamed of that papistic dress. Cast it off; I don't ask you to abjure your popery, but come and take service under our queen, and you may be certain that you will not be forgotten when Blount, our puissant deputy, has crushed O'Neill and O'Donnell. The broad lands of those base traitors shall soon be given to her Majesty's true lieges, and, assuredly, fingers like yours were better employed with a sword or matchlock than fumbling a rosary."

"Little did I heed the ribald jocularities of the profane soldier; and weary as was the road to the castle of Ballimore, it seemed light and pleasant when I reflected that it led to the crowning of my most cherished aspirations. At length we reached our journey's end, and I had the happiness of finding myself face to face with the Bishop of Kilmore, the guardian of Multifernan, Father Bernard Moriarty, and some other members of our community. They all were astonished at seeing me, for they knew that I could have escaped from the convent had I wished to do so; but when I explained to them the motives which induced me to remain a prisoner in Shane's hands, nothing could exceed the joy which each of them evinced. 'You know, dear father,' said I to the Provincial, 'that the term of my noviciate expires to-day, and that I desire nothing so much on this earth as to be enrolled a poor and humble disciple of St. Francis. If, therefore, you deem me worthy of such an honour, permit me this instant to make my profession.'

"'What!' said the venerable bishop, from whose aged eyes the tears streamed fast and hot, 'are you prepared to renounce your liberty for the poor habit of our order? do you consent to forego the enjoyments of a secular career for a life of penance and mortification? You told us that the man into whose power we have fallen has promised you much, provided you would divest yourself of the habit, and betake you to your old profession of arms; ponder, therefore, what you should do, lest perhaps you might one day repent you of precipitancy.'

"Most reverend father," I replied, "nothing can shake or alter my firm resolution. I have long yearned for this day, and if it be not presumptuous in one unlettered as I am to make the reflection, I would humbly submit, that all the calamities which have overtaken us of late should be regarded as so many stumbling-blocks cast by Satan across my path to divert me from the goal for which I have been struggling."

"'Enough, enough,' replied the bishop, 'your desire shall be satisfied, and may heaven help you on the rugged road you have chosen.'

* Lord Mountjoy.

"I then threw myself on my knees at the Provincial's feet, and in the dim light of the prison-chamber made my profession, and was duly received into the order of St. Francis. Never, never shall I forget the joy I felt on that day; never while I live shall the recollection of that hour perish from my memory. Countless are the splendid functions I have witnessed since then here in Louvain and in Brussels; but I doubt much if any of them all could equal the solemn rite of my profession in that castle of Loughshodie. Realize it to your imagination, dear brother: picture to yourself a young man in the plenitude of his strength, kneeling at the feet of an aged bishop and his Provincial, both captives for their loyalty to God and the faith of their fathers, and there, in the gloom of that dungeon, pronouncing with unflinching tongue those irrevocable vows which consecrated him the liege servant of God, and doomed him to the persecution of ruthless laws.

"The recollection of that crowning moment of my life has made me digress. So let me now relate how it fared with myself and fellow-captives soon after my profession. Young and vigorous as I was, it was only natural that I should think of effecting my escape from the Castle of Ballimore, and I accordingly took counsel with Father Bernard Moriarty, to whom I communicated the various projects which presented themselves to my mind. He and I were lodged in the same tower every night, and our jailors, acting more from caprice than system, occasionally secured us with a ponderous iron chain. It occurred to me, then, that we should bide our time, and break prison some night when our limbs were unshackled; but on proposing this idea to my fellow-sufferer, he would not entertain it. I next bethought me that we might watch our opportunity when the soldiers were out exercising, secure the gates against them, and hold the castle till such time as either of the native princes, O'Neill or O'Donnell, then in arms, would send troops to our rescue. This expedient seemed to me very feasible, but after a careful investigation of the premises, I discovered that we had not as much gunpowder or food as would enable us to maintain ourselves in the place longer than four days. Then again it occurred to me that such a proceeding would necessarily be attended with bloodshed, and as my conscience rebuked me for entertaining so hazardous a scheme, I resolved to abandon it. At length I found a quantity of tow, of which the soldiers used to make matches for their arquebuses and the falconets mounted on the ramparts, and I immediately set about twisting it into a rope by which I might, whenever a favourable moment appeared, let myself down from the window of the tower into the ditch of the castle, and thus regain my liberty. It was idle to think that Father Moriarty would adopt my plan, and I therefore did not impart it to him. At last the long-wished-for night came, and commending my soul to God and St. Francis, I secured one end of the rope to an iron stanchion of the window, and gradually lowered myself till I was within ten or twelve

feet of the ditch. At this critical moment the strain on the rope caused it to break, and I fell into the ditch, receiving in my rapid descent some trifling bruises from the projecting wall. Fortunately for me the ditch was full of water, which reached above my chest; and still more fortunately the ward on the castle-tower was quite unconscious of what was passing. Nevertheless, I had hardly cleared the ditch when I saw the shadowy figures of the soldiers running hither and thither in the little camp outside the castle, with blazing torches in their hands, as if alarmed by an unexpected onfall. There was no time to be lost, so nerving myself for the worst, I made what haste I could, and, although not very well acquainted with the locality, I walked fully ten miles that night till I reached the house of a friend, who gave me shelter and cordial welcome. Thus was God pleased to deliver me from that stronghold of Ballimore.

"Almost immediately after my escape Shane resolved to send his remaining prisoners to Dublin Castle, for he thought that the Irish princes (O'Neill and O'Donnell) would attempt their rescue. However, as the bishop was far advanced in years and very feeble, Shane allowed him to take up his abode in the house of a Catholic nobleman, living in the neighbourhood, who pledged his honour that the prelate would present himself to the English authorities in Dublin at the close of winter. The bishop was faithful to his engagement, for he set out for the metropolis about the end of March, and on his arrival was thrown into prison, where he remained till the summer of 1602, when his friends effected his enlargement by paying a heavy fine.

As to the other prisoners, among whom was my friend Father Bernard Moriarty, they were sent under a strong escort to Dublin, but no sooner had they reached the neighbourhood of Multifernan, than they were met by Walter Nugent, standard-bearer to the Baron of Delvin, who commanded a company of thirty soldiers in the queen's pay. This valiant young officer demanded the release of the prisoners, but when that was refused, he and his men attacked the escort, and eventually succeeded in liberating the friars. Unfortunately, however, two other companies of the queen's troops, on hearing the musketry, came speedily to the scene of action, and overpowered Walter Nugent's detachment, six of whom lost their lives in the skirmish. The friars were then sent on to the prison of Dublin castle. As for my friend Moriarty, he received a gun-shot wound which fractured both his thighs, and after lingering a short time in intense agony in a dungeon, where they refused him bed, medical attendance, or any other comfort, he finally surrendered his pure soul to God, and was buried in the cemetery of St. James, outside the city wall. Thus terminated the career of this venerable priest, who, in my opinion, deserves to be styled a martyr. He was profoundly versed in civil and canon law, and distinguished himself by his acquirements, when a mere stripling, in Spain. He was dean of Ardagh, archdeacon of Clonmiconise, and when Matthew de Oviedo

succeeded to the archbishopric of Dublin,* he appointed my lamented friend his vicar-general.

Meanwhile the Provincial and another priest remained in custody, and I need hardly tell you that I spared no effort to obtain their enlargement. My exertions were finally crowned with success, for on representing the matter to the princes O'Neill and Mac Mahon, they willingly exchanged two English prisoners of war, then in their hands, for my two reverend confrères.

Elated by this favourable turn in our affairs, I assembled as many of our friars as had survived such a sad series of calamities, and exhorted them to join me in re-establishing ourselves in Multifernan. They one and all adopted my views, and owing to our untiring efforts, we contrived to erect, before the festival of the Nativity (1601), a small dwelling-house within the ruins of our burnt monastery. In the following year, however, Father Nehemias Gray, our guardian, resolved to repair, as far as he could, the church and the monastery, and he therefore procured a large quantity of timber from Delvin-ni-Cochlain† in order to roof one of the chapels and a portion of the ancient dwelling-house. The undertaking prospered beyond our expectations, but scarcely were the partial restorations completed when a body of English troops, commanded by Francis Rochfort, came suddenly upon us, and mercilessly burnt down every inch of the work on which we had expended so much toil. As for the friars, some saved themselves by flight, and others were carried off to Dublin, where they were thrown into prison. The bishop of Kilmore was among those whom Rochfort arrested on that occasion, but as he was decrepit and unable to walk or stand, they flung him into a brake of briars, and there left him, as they thought, dead. Notwithstanding this second demolition of our poor house, the friars returned to Multifernan as soon as they were released from prison, and even now,‡ despite unrelenting persecution, we have there a community of eighteen, including lay brothers, who reside in cabins which they raised within our ancient precincts.

"Lest, however, their names or memories should be forgotten, I would have you know, that of all our enemies, none were more cruel than Sir Dudley Loftus,§ son of the queen's archbishop of Dublin, Sir Richard Grear, Patrick Fox, high sheriff of Westmeath, and Sir Oliver Lambert, formerly president of Connaught. As for Loftus, he came accompanied by the said Grear to Multifernan,

* A native of Segovia in Spain, and appointed archbishop of Dublin in 1600. Owing to the persecution during Elizabeth's reign, the see of Dublin had been vacant for the previous thirty-six years.

† The barony of Garrycastle in the King's Co, east of the Shannon.

‡ The reader will bear in mind that Father Mooney furnished these particulars in 1617.

§ This extraordinary man, for an account of whose numerous works, vide "Ware's Writers of Ireland," was born in the castle of Rathfarnham, and in after life earned an unenviable notoriety by his reckless profligacy. Some one said of him that "he never knew so much learning in the keeping of a fool."

and carried off five of our brethren to Dublin, where after being detained in custody eighteen months, they were ultimately released, on pledging themselves to appear whenever it pleased the authorities to summon them. This occurred, as well as I remember, in 1607. In 1613, Fox came stealthily on our poor friars, and arrested, among others, Father Bernard Gray, who, after a year's confinement, was suffered to seek refuge in France, where he died of disease contracted in the fetid dungeon of Dublin Castle. In the following year Sir Oliver Lambert came with a company of soldiers to Multifernan, seized the few friars he found there, and committed them prisoners to the jail of Mullingar. Nevertheless, as I said before, Multifernan has never lacked a community of Franciscans, for whose maintenance we are mainly indebted to the illustrious house of Nugent, and the unfailing charity of the Catholics residing in the neighbourhood and throughout Westmeath.

"But as these reminiscences of Multifernan would be imperfect without some notice of the most distinguished members of our order, whose society and friendship it was my happiness to enjoy there, I will now furnish you with a few particulars which I think deserve to be recorded. Let me, therefore, begin with Richard Brady, bishop of Kilmore, whose virtues and sufferings should never be forgotten by the future historian of our calamitous times.

That illustrious individual sprang from the noble house of his name, which for many an age ruled with princely sway in Brefney—O'Reilly.¶ At a very early period of his life he distinguished himself as a jurist, for indeed he was profoundly versed in the canon and civil law. Family influence and talents such as his would, doubtless, have raised him to eminence had he chosen a secular career; but caring little for the fame or fortune which he might have won so easily in the senate or in the forum, he renounced the world, and took our poor habit in the convent of Cavan. His piety, learning, and prudence were the theme of every tongue; and although he¶ never left Ireland or sought for himself any dignity, the supreme Pontiff promoted him to the bishopric of Ardagh, on the 23rd of January 1576. Resigning that diocese, he was translated to the see of Kilmore, and held the office of Vice-primate after the death of Raymond O'Gallagher, Bishop of Derry, who was slain by the English in 1601. It may not be superfluous to inform you, that during the vacancy of the see of Armagh, or the absence of its metropolitan, the office of Vice-Primate has, according to immemorial custom, devolved on the senior suffragan of the province. Thus, O'Gallagher succeeded to that dignity when Edmund Mac Gauran fell in an action** fought by M'Guire, Prince of Fermanagh, against the troops com-

¶ Co. Cavan.

¶ Ware, in his *Life of this Bishop*, erroneously asserts that he came from Rome with Papal Bulls, commanding the Irish Catholics to take arms against the English government.

** July 3, 1593, near Tulsk, Barony of Roscommon.

manded by Bingham, president of Connaught; and when the Bishop of Kilmore departed this life, Cornelius O'Deveny,* the martyred Bishop of Down and Connor, filled the vacant place. I have deemed it necessary to make these remarks lest such a venerable usage should ever be forgotten. Now let me resume my narrative of our bishop's life. He dwelt constantly in Multifernan, and never left it except on the business of his diocese, when he always preferred such accommodation as he could find in some house of our Order to the comforts and hospitality which he might have received from the Catholic nobility and gentry. During his residence among us he invariably wore the habit, partook of such fare as our poor refectory afforded, and never dined apart from the common table of the friars, except when strangers were entertained in the guest-house. His entire retinue consisted of his confessor, chaplain, and two boys, who attended him when saying Mass. I had frequent opportunities of witnessing the austerities he practised, and can avouch that Franciscan never lived who took greater delight in obeying the rigid ordinances of our holy founder. Even when broken down by old age and infirmities, he could not be induced to wear a coarse linen shirt, and despite all remonstrances of our friars, he rejected any little luxuries we could procure for him, graciously thanking those who offered them, and saying, at the same time, that he had chosen a life of mortification, and would die as he had lived. He, as I have already told you, was arrested three times by the English authorities, who on two occasions set him at large on payment of a heavy fine; but on the last they tore the habit off his aged person, and left him for dead in a thicket. Towards the close of his days he resigned the see of Kilmore, and finally departed this life, September 1607. In compliance with his wishes we interred him in the usual burial-place of the friars, that is to say, in the cloister, and right under the door leading to the church.

"Another remarkable personage who entered our community of Multifernan about the time of the bishop's decease was Andrew Nugent, a member of the illustrious house to whom we owe so much. This gentleman was for a long time anxious to take our poor habit, but as he was married, he could not be received till his wife died. On her decease, however, he entered as a lay brother, and during the five or six years he survived, he was an exemplar of every virtue that might be expected from a sincere follower of St. Francis. Having completed his seventieth year, he died in 1614, and was buried with his brethren.

"A few of my old confrères are still living, after having passed through the fiery ordeal of persecution. Among them is Father James Hayn, who, when a very young man, was sent by Gregory XIII. with a consecrated banner to James Fitzmaurice† when he entered

on that campaign in which he laid down his life for his religion and country. This reverend father, now in his ninetieth year, was among those arrested by Shane at the first burning of Multifernan. At a subsequent period when Rochfort invaded our precincts, Father Hayn received three severe wounds, and was committed to a dark cell in the castle of Dublin. Owing to the humanity of a fellow-prisoner, he recovered, and was finally set at large; he is now living at Multifernan. Father John Gray, whom I mentioned before, was again arrested in 1608, together with the baron of Delvin, on a charge of having aided the flight of the princes O'Neill and O'Donnell. As soon, however, as the baron cleared himself of complicity in that transaction, Father Gray was dismissed, and suffered to pass the remainder of his days in the neighbourhood of Multifernan.

"Two others are still in prison, namely, Father Charles Crassan and Father Didacus Conry, who were arrested by Daniel, the king's archbishop of Tuam in 1617, when questing alms for their brethren of Multifernan. I have now detailed to you all that I know of that venerable monastery, where persecution waged ruthless war against us, and where our brethren comported themselves with a heroic fidelity that should never be forgotten. Let me add that Father Maurice Ultan, is at present guardian of the community."

The tomb erected by James Nugent still exists in the church, bearing the following inscription: "*Sumptibus Jacobi Nugent. F. Richardi Nugent de Donover qui obiit, 18 Feb. A.D. 1615*; where there is also a monument to a descendant of William Delamer, the original founder. There can be little doubt that the venerable edifice was considerably restored in 1644-5, when Richard Nugent, Lord Delvin, sat in the upper, and Piers Nugent of Ballynecurr, in the lower house of the great Catholic Confederation at Kilkenny. Sir Percy Nugent, of Donore, the actual chief of his distinguished house, has always proved himself a generous patron to the Franciscans of Multifernan, nor should we omit to say that the Rev. Mr. Conway, who was guardian in 1828, took great pains to preserve the monastery, to which, doubtless, Father Mooney's narrative will impart additional interest. It is almost superfluous to observe that the *Annales* entitled de "*Monte Fernando*," were not written in Multifernan, as is clearly proved by Dr. Aquilla Smith in his learned Introduction (ad *Annal. de M. F.*), published in the *Archæological Tracts* relating to Ireland. Sir Henry Piers, in his "*Description of Westmeath*," states that the rebellion of 1641 was concocted within the walls of Multifernan, and that the convent was, at that period, a flourishing establishment. Little reliance, however, should be placed in the baronet's assertions; and although we were to accept his statements as critically accurate, we should not forget that Multifernan was visited in 1642 by Tichbourne, governor of Drogheda, who after burning, as he himself informs us, "*all the corn and houses in the neighbourhood*," was not likely to spare the monastery, if it had been then restored.

* Executed in Dublin, 1612, and buried in St. James's churchyard.

† See O'Daly's *Geraldines*, and Haverly's *Hist. of Ireland*, p. 410.

MRS. PUCKER.

A TRANSMARINE SKETCH. BY B. PHILIP WEST.

I.

"ALLOW me to say one word, Mrs. Pucker——"

"Not a word. Nonsense, Jack! See with your own eyes—hear with your own ears. Think—if it be in the nature of a hussar to think. Jane Williams, I tell you, is the only girl I have ever looked upon, since I was myself in my teens, sure to make a good wife—no matter what her husband may be—rich or poor—a wise man or a fool."

Such were the words unexpectedly heard by me a few weeks ago, whilst descending a rocky and precipitous path, leading from the steep heights that overhang the white velvet sands of Varech, a small bathing-place on the coast of France.

The words that had been spoken in the sharp decisive tones of a positive woman, did not at the time make any very profound impression upon my mind; for my attention was altogether absorbed by the voice in which they were uttered.

I had heard that voice before; and every one of its disagreeably distinct modulations was familiar to me.

How many years had passed away since I had listened to it?—most unwillingly listened to it—hour after hour—week after week—month following month! And now I again heard it, as lively, as fresh, as *bruyante*, as vigorous as ever.

In the year 1835, I became, as a student at the Westminster Hospital, for the first time a settled inhabitant of London. I then lived in Bouverie Street, in one of the houses, I believe, that of late years form a part of the large printing establishment of Messrs Bradbury and Evans; and my place of study—the back drawing-room—was separated by a very few feet from a range of houses then let out in separate apartments to the working classes.

From one of those back apartments—nearly on a level with my own room—I heard the incessant clatter of that tongue, which I now recognized in 1858, amid the cliffs of Varech.

In the winter as the summer of the year 1835, was that untiring tongue, and that unbroken voice ever, ever talking; ever, ever sounding in my ears. The voice was that of a woman—of a woman who seemed to be always working—and urging others to follow her example.

I had never seen the talker, for she never appeared at the window looking into the shred of a yard that separated the backs of the houses in the two streets from each other. The talker was to me "a voice and nothing else." For a long time I had desired to behold her, in order that I might be able to embody in my thoughts an image of the *substantiality* that was so detestable to me—that pestered, and worried, and persecuted me from six in the morning until eight at night, on the weak days.

Time and patience modified my sentiments: they at-

tuned my ear to the everlasting polysyllabic sound; and, finally, I began to take an interest in my unseen neighbour; because it was plain, from the fragments of her conversation which I could not avoid comprehending, that the talker was a hard-working woman—maintaining a family either wholly, or in part, by her own exertions, what her occupation might be I never could guess, only this was certain—it was one that knew no pause, no rest, no truce, no holiday from Monday morning until Saturday night. It was also manifest that the household over which the voice presided was one systematically regulated. The clock did not strike more punctually than were sure to be heard the jingling of delph, the rattling of knives, the arranging of plates for breakfast, dinner, and supper, ever recurring at the same moment each day.

The voice that I had so long listened to in Bouverie street, I was destined to hear again in Varech.

It was the voice of Mrs. Pucker!

From the first hour of my arrival in Varech I had heard no other name mentioned. No matter what might be the denomination of the ruling power over the French in France—"a king,"—"a republic"—"a president," or "an emperor," there could be no doubt that over the English in Varech, the supreme mistress—the autocrat—the imperial government, was this self-same redoubtable Mrs. Pucker.

The voice of by-gone days had returned; the accents were in my ear, and the personage by whom utterance was given to them, was at last visibly present to my eyes.

There was Mrs. Pucker before me!

Twenty-three years from the time I had been a deafened medical student in Bouverie street, I travelled to Varech—a charming little French marine village, one of the many attractions of which I was informed was its best villas being occupied by—what is sometimes very difficult to be found on the continent—a small but select English society.

I brought with me to Varech four letters of introduction; but I was somewhat surprised, upon presenting them, being asked the same question by each of my new acquaintances—"Had I a letter of introduction to Mrs. Pucker?" and upon my answering in the negative, the self-same remark being made: "that it was very unfortunate: that I ought not to have come to Varech without a letter of introduction to Mrs. Pucker—that Mrs. Pucker was very particular,—that Mrs. Pucker could not endure and would not tolerate in Varech any one of whom she herself did not know something—and that, in short there would be no use in stopping, or trying to stop in Varech, if Mrs. Pucker did not *visé* my passport."

"And who," I asked one of my new acquaintances, "is this Mrs. Pucker? How comes she to be the ruling spirit of the place?"

The same reply, almost in the same words, was given by all. "Mrs. Pucker is the richest woman in this department; Mrs. Pucker has the largest house, and

gives the nicest parties in Varech. If you are not countenanced by Mrs. Pucker, no one will wish to know you: if you are discountenanced by Mrs. Pucker, no one will venture to speak to you!"

At the very moment that I was thinking of Mrs. Pucker, and wishing that some lucky chance might make me speedily and agreeably known to her, there she stood before me—an old acquaintance!—until now unseen—and therefore incapable of being recognized.

There was Mrs. Pucker! an active, lively, little old woman—with her snow-white hair, white as the white silk that lined her black, poking, coal-scuttle bonnet—with high, fair, unwrinkled forehead, bushy black eyebrows, a straight well-formed nose, thin lips, good sound teeth, a sharp perky chin, cheeks still bearing a tinge of red, and large dazzling eyes, that shone with all the fire and vivacity of youth. Such was my old acquaintance, arrayed in plain black silk, and without a single ornament to indicate she was the possessor and distributor of that fortune, which French as well as English alike described with the same word, when they said it was "enormous."

There was the greatest woman in Varech! There was she whose word was law—who governed every body—took care of every body—looked after every body—managed every body—controlled every body.

A very remarkable woman I found Mrs. Pucker to be. She had now lived five years in Varech, and had produced quite a revolution in the place. The maire was her man of all work, the curé an agile aid-de-camp, whilst the gendarmérie obeyed her orders as implicitly as if they had issued from the Minister of the Interior at Paris. The solitary street of Varech had been repaired—the pigs were no longer permitted to perambulate its pathways—yelping curs were muzzled or drowned—the heaps of manure which formerly festered around the door-ways were removed out of sight—the little gardens were filled with flowers, as if Varech was an English village—the children of the poor were at school—some in nursery-schools—in the day time; and all were to be seen in the evening, playing, with neatly patched or new good dresses upon them. Varech was metamorphosed. It had become one of the neatest, cleanest, happiest-looking of villages in France. The eye of Mrs. Pucker had seen its defects; the mind of Mrs. Pucker had shewn how they could be remedied; and the purse of Mrs. Pucker had supplied the means for carrying out the reforms she desired.

II.

Mrs. Pucker's unceasing activity in action, and her untiring eloquence in language, soon rendered her a noted personage in a small village. She was not long there until the idea got possession of her mind, that in some way or another—very probably in a manner inexplicable to herself—she was the representative of England in Varech, and that it, therefore, became her duty to see that no one should be in the place over which she presided, who was likely to bring discredit upon that lady-like sovereign, who pays her bills punctually,

and has always been a pattern of propriety and morality.

The superintendence of Mrs. Pucker has been attended with very unpleasant consequences to more than one of the objects of her watchful supervision.

For instance, in the early part of the last summer, the solitary hotel of Varech was filled with the family and servants of an individual, who described himself as Baron Balrothery, in the Irish peerage, with splendid estates in Munster and Connaught. The baron was a remarkably fine, tall, handsome man, with black moustachios and beard, that might be envied by an officer in the cuirassiers. His fingers glittered with rings, and his shirt was blazing with diamond studs. But fine, and tall, handsome and grand as the baron appeared to be, he was a shabby pigmy, when compared to her ladyship—the Baroness Balrothery—a gigantic middle-aged woman, with a skin as bright as chalk, and cheeks as red as vermillion, and requiring for her sole accommodation one side of the huge chariot that conveyed her and his lordship to Varech. The baron came with a whole retinue of servants, all dressed in his own livery of green and gold. His lordship had not been forty-eight hours in the town, until he, his wife, his chariot, and his domestics, had been to every shop in the place and neighbourhood, and distributed their patronage in the most impartial manner to each and all, in the shape of profuse orders for every description of articles that could by any possibility be required for the fitting up, in the most magnificent style, a large chateau in the vicinity, of which the baron declared he had become a tenant for three years.

The hotel-keeper was in ecstasies! He never before had received such fine customers! The baron and the baroness fared most sumptuously every day, and in the French style of living too. They had the most expensive wines both at breakfast and dinner. Their repasts were absolutely luxurious. As to that indescribable class of loungers and mendicants, who live on the door-steps of hotels, and gather tribute from carriages and diligences, they were in raptures, for the baron never appeared abroad without scattering *sous* by handfuls, with which he was—according to his orders—abundantly supplied in the hotel.

For six and ninety hours the town was in a state of commotion, and nothing was talked of but "the great English lord," and "the grand English peeress," and then—the enthusiasm came to a sudden stop! A cold chill, all in a moment, pervaded the breast and thrilled through the marrow of every jubilant customer of the noble and illustrious foreigners; for it was whispered about that Lord and Lady Balrothery had called on Mrs. Pucker, and that she had positively refused to see them. Such was the first rumour—but then followed fast another—that was as terrific as it was inexplicable. It was to this effect:—that when Lord and Lady Balrothery sent in their cards to Mrs. Pucker, that cross-tempered old woman had returned them with certain words written in pencil upon each—mysterious English words which no one could understand—for on his lord-

ship's card was pencilled down : "*Pat Moriarty, private, 11th Hussars ;*" whilst her ladyship's card bore this inscription : "*Maryanne Molloy, spinster, 2½, Whitefriars'-lane, Fleet-street.*" This rumour was followed by the positive declaration, that on reading these incomprehensible words, his lordship had turned as red as scarlet, and her ladyship as white as a sheet, and then, in addition to these rumours, came the positive and indisputable fact, viz. that driving back from Mrs. Pucker's house to the hotel, the baron and baroness had ordered all their trunks to be packed up, as they were, they said, going out of town for a few days ; and then, it was added, they left in such a hurry that his lordship gave the hotel-keeper an English note for £100, and never waited to receive the change,—thus acting consistently with all that grandeur and generosity of reckless expenditure, which he had exhibited from the first moment of his appearance in Varch.

The fact as to the sudden departure of Lord and Lady Balrothery, was ascertained by their customers to be unquestionable. The £100 note with which his lordship had paid his hotel bill, was declared by Mrs. Pucker not to be worth the paper on which it was printed. It was a note, not of the bank of England, but of "the bank of fashion!" If it had been given in mistake by his lordship for a genuine note, the error had never been discovered by him. Certain it is, that the last time the baron and baroness were seen in Varch was in returning from their first visit to Mrs. Pucker.

III.

In another remarkable case, which was the subject of conversation for an entire month amongst all the inhabitants of Varch and its vicinity, the vigilance of Mrs. Pucker was exhibited in a very extraordinary way.

Amongst the settled English residents was an exceedingly pious young gentleman—the owner of considerable property in Oxfordshire—the eldest son of a baronet, and, like his father, a clergyman of the Church of England. The Rev. Augustus Barton was a favourite with all classes. His gentleness of disposition, his simplicity of manners, and his edifying conduct, won for him the love and esteem of every one who became acquainted with him. He had, at his own expense, fitted up a little chapel for the benefit of the English residents, and there he gratuitously went through the church service every Sunday. He was soon a complete pet with Mrs. Pucker ; for he submitted without a murmur or the slightest remonstrance to all her criticism upon his sermons. She declared that though he had not the wit of a Fuller, nor the genius of a Taylor, yet she was quite sure he was fitter to be an Archbishop of Canterbury than old Doctor Sumner, whose "dry style," as she described it, "good young Mr. Barton too much affected, and too slavishly imitated."

Nothing could possibly prosper better than "the English chapel" of the Rev. Augustus Barton did for a time. It was, in truth, a model of propriety for months ;

but, an incident one day occurred which marred its harmony, and completely shattered its innocent and unsuspecting preacher's peace of mind.

Two strangers had been added to the congregation. These strangers were ladies : an old and a young lady. Both were dressed in deep mourning ; both wore thick, black veils—so black and so thick, it was impossible to distinguish the features of either—but still, the veil of the younger was not so absolutely impenetrable as to prevent one from perceiving that she had a very brilliant complexion, and that a profusion of light-coloured hair glittered with all the brilliancy of gold beneath the jetty net-work that in vain sought to conceal its richness and beauty.

For many Sundays the conduct of the two strangers was not only becoming and solemn, but that of the younger might be described as "edifyingly devout!" The responses were made by her with an unction that seemed to thrill through the very heart of the pious pastor, as her words, slightly tinged with a foreign accent, sounded sweetly and sanctimoniously upon his enraptured sense of hearing.

The conduct of the strangers outside the church was in perfect accordance with their behaviour within its walls. All that was ascertained—all that was known—all that Mrs. Pucker herself, with strict and diligent research, could learn respecting them—was calculated to win for them universal sympathy and respect.

The substance of the information thus collected could be told in a very few words. The ladies had come direct from London. The old lady was the widow of an Indian officer—many years deceased—a Colonel M'Sly—a Scotchman. The young lady was her daughter, who had been born and educated in Italy. Both were plunged in grief—absolutely overwhelmed with affliction : the old lady by the death of her brother, the young lady by the death of her uncle, who had hitherto acted as her guardian, and with whom mother and daughter had lately lived for a few years ; the old lady was travelling for the benefit of her health, which was very precarious ; and the daughter had devoted herself to the care of her mother. The determination of both was the same : to shrink from observation, to eschew society, and to consecrate themselves to a life of religion. Hence, they never stirred abroad, but to go to church : hence, they sought for no one's acquaintance : hence they covered their faces with their veils, so as to escape, if possible, being noticed by a wicked world which the old lady was tired of, and the young lady wished never to know.

This was the substance of the information collected respecting them ; but Mrs. Pucker was soon in a position to add two very important particulars. First, she had ascertained that the two strangers did not go in debt ; that they paid on the instant for every thing with which they were supplied. Secondly, that the young lady who was never seen abroad without a thick black veil, was declared by the woman in whose house she lodged to be one of the most wonderfully beautiful young ladies that ever was looked at.

The good and devout juvenile clergyman felt, of course, an interest in every one who formed a portion of his congregation, and when this intelligence reached him—when he reflected on the fervour, and then on the retiring demeanour of the young lady, who, in addition to her other virtues, sought to conceal her loveliness from the knowledge of mankind, he felt that it was peculiarly incumbent upon him—if possible—to console her in her grief, and to strengthen her by his exhortations to persevere in the path of piety.

With this view he called to see mother and daughter; but was unable to obtain an interview, as both ladies assured him in a nice note—neatly folded, but slightly defective in its orthography—they were, as yet, unfitted, one by illness, and the other by overwhelming grief, to receive visitors; but requesting their good pastor (if he could spare such a sweet book from his library for a few days) to oblige them with that particularly exhilarating volume—"Harvey's Meditations."

Poor Augustus Barton! From that day forth, it was observed that he seemed to pray for and to preach at no other persons in his little chapel, but the two dolorous dark-dressed strangers. He became inoculated with their sorrows. From that day forth, he walked as slowly and solemnly as "the man with the plume" at a funeral; looked as grave as "a mute," and spoke in the sepulchral tones of "an undertaker." In his case the bow of Cupid was covered with crape, and its arrows feathered with weepers. Like Narcissus he was in love with a sad-looking shadow. His future destiny was plain to the simplest of his congregation. All felt convinced that so soon as the veiled mourner should choose to shew her fair young face, she might calculate upon an easy and certain victory over the pining Augustus.

Mrs. Pucker was exceedingly mystified, and greatly displeased at all these doings. The soul of candour and plain dealing in all she ever said or did, she could not understand these two gloomy, masked, and immured ladies—always veiled—never venturing abroad—perching themselves apart in an English chapel, in an out of the way French town—"cocking their caps, as the young one was doing, and no mistake, at a young unmarried clergyman, and that clergyman having a good fortune, and as unpractised in the ways of the world as if he were still a child."

Mrs. Pucker saw there was a mystery in the proceedings of those strange women; and wherever there was a mystery, it was her firm conviction that there also must be wickedness plotting, to do some mischief.

What was to be done? that is, what could *she* do, supposing her suspicions were correct? It was obvious Augustus Barton was about to make a fool of himself. Who were these women? Both came from London. She was sure of that, for the Maire had seen their passport, and one of them was undoubtedly very beautiful—a remarkable girl in one respect, for her eye-brows and eye-lashes were of inky blackness, whilst her hair was light auburn. Who *was* she? An Italian, as her accent declared her to be; or a Scotch maiden, as her name—M'Sly—would shew her to be?

What was she—Mrs. Pucker—to do? Something, at all events. And in order that she might determine what that something should be, she would at once order from England to Varch her nephew Jack of the 11th Hussars, "because Jack," as she said, "knew every body in London who was *not* worth knowing,—from Lord Look-on, who commanded in the Crimea, down to little Billy Stumps, who rode the winning horse at the last Derby."

The letter for "nephew Jack" was written. Mrs. Pucker saw a crisis now approaching, and therefore the letter was couched in very urgent terms, fully explaining all particulars to Jack, why he was wanted, and why "ordered" to come without a moment's delay.

Upon the succeeding Sunday the two veiled strangers were in their usual seats in the private chapel of the Rev. Augustus Barton—seats that fronted the pulpit of the reverend gentleman; but it was remarked of these two—"the observed of all observers"—that the old lady in the veil appeared to be more than usually feeble; that she came tottering down the chapel leaning heavily on her daughter's arm, and that the veiled daughter seemed to be—if that was possible—more devoted to and more anxious about her precious parent than usual.

Deep sighs were heaved by the tender-hearted divine as he looked upon this touching scene. The religious feelings of the mother urging her, despite her weakness, to be one of his congregation; the filial piety and affection of the daughter, as she thus upheld her failing parent, and sustained her in the performance of her devotions.

The service of the day was about to commence.

The Rev. Augustus Barton had ascended the reading-desk. He was about to open his book, when his eyes, as usual, were directed towards the veiled strangers. He paused—then jumping down the steps, exclaimed:

"God bless me! the old lady is fainting!"

At the same instant the young lady screamed: "My mother! my beloved mother! Help! help! dear, good, Mr. Barton! help! my adored mother is dying."

The old veiled lady fell from her seat on the floor, and as she did so, the young lady, in the wildness of her grief, and the distraction of her agitation, not only raised her black veil, but flung off her black bonnet, and large black mantle; and, in so doing, presented to the astonished gaze of the Rev. Augustus Barton a marvellous specimen of feminine beauty, to which grief seemed to impart additional charms.

Never, it was believed by the Rev. Augustus Barton, had Varch before seen a young girl possessed of so many personal attractions as were then unexpectedly presented to its view.

The fear and agitation which were pourtrayed in the sweet face of the stranger did not, in the estimation of Augustus Barton, mar its beauty in the slightest degree, whilst the nymph-like figure, now that she had flung away her wide black mantle, was in a low evening dress, and therefore became exuberantly displayed in exquisitely graceful attitudes, as the devoted maiden sought to revive by her caresses her beloved mother.

"Oh! my kind, dear, dear Mr. Barton!" exclaimed the young lady, apparently insane with grief, and therefore not to be considered as conscious of what she was saying: "Oh! come! come! my dear, my saint-like Mr. Barton, and by your prayers, restore to life my adored mother."

"Yes! my dear angel! my enchantress! command your Barton—your slave—your lover—your destined husband," said poor Mr. Barton, really not knowing what he was saying.

"Restore my mother—my dearest Mr Barton—and my hand and heart are yours for ever," sobbed the lovely young lady in the low evening dress.

"I say, Mrs. Pucker, is it allowed to clap one's hands in a church, as if you were in a theatre?" said a sharp, low, rough voice in the midst of this tender scene.

"What do you mean, Jack?" said Mrs. Pucker, in the same loud tone of voice.

"I say that young girl there that is play-acting with the parson is doing the thing a deal better here than ever she could perform a part in the Haymarket."

"Have you seen that girl before, Jack?"

"Seen her! a thousand times. She was first sea-nymph last season in the ballet, at the Italian opera house. Holloa! VIRGINIA GALLOTTI!"

It was marvellous—it was more than marvellous—it was absolutely miraculous, how at the mention of that name, the old lady at once recovered, sat bolt upright in her seat; and how, at the same instant, the young lady hurriedly resumed her bonnet, veil and mantle, and taking the old woman by the hand, said—

"Come, old girl, Varech is no longer a place for either of us to stop in. What a make-sport and a spoil-sport you are, Jack! I heard you one night behind the scenes telling your friend, Lord Look-on, of this bathing village, and of its innocent, unlicked numbskull of a parson. It was from you, then, I took the idea of entrapping him into a marriage. I had no notion you would have come here to expose me. I suppose that old busy-body, your aunt, Mrs. Pucker, sent for you. Good-bye, Jack! all is fair in love and war, you know. Happy to see you when you return to London, Jack, and make you better acquainted with this old lady—my dresser at the theatre—Mother Dobson.

IV.

These specimens much suffice to show *how* diligent and untiring is Mrs. Pucker in her superintendence over all visitors, who, like herself, owe allegiance to Queen Victoria. These specimens may, too, be considered as sufficient to demonstrate *why* it is that no one from the British Isles can venture upon becoming a resident in Varech, unless with her sanction and approval.

I was for some time doubtful as to my own reception; because I fancied that a person who could tell of the humble apartment looking upon the back-rooms of Bouverie-street, was one whose presence would not be welcomed into the magnificent saloon in Varech.

I made a great mistake in forming such an opinion.

Although I had not seen her when I lived in Bouverie-street, she had frequently observed me, and at once recognised me.

But what is her story? How account for so great and so extraordinary a change between her poverty in 1835, and her riches in 1858?

Enough for the present to say, that Mrs. Pucker has been "a deceased wife's sister;" that the wealth she now distributes with a liberal and a generous hand, is hers by right of marriage. Her untiring industry as an embroiderer—her youth, almost her life sacrificed in the effort to maintain the bed-ridden husband and infant children of her deceased sister—attracted first the attention and then the admiration of her employer, a rich dealer in the city. He chose the thrifty manager of the bed-ridden brother-in-law for a wife; and bequeathing to her all his property, confided to her generous care the future welfare of his and her young kinsfolk.

Such has been and such is Mrs. Pucker—a woman of many virtues, and with one great and glaring defect—an untiring tongue. At none of her waking moments can it be said she is like to *Epicene*, and "has brought a wealthy dowry in her silence."

How are we to deal with such a character? To censure, or to absolve it? The world which loves hypocrisy, which deals tenderly with frivolity, and winks at vice, when vice is gold-plated, will never tolerate a loud-voiced old lady who hates shams, detests humbugs, and will—"stand no nonsense."

ROME:

A GLANCE AT ITS PRESENT STATE, WITH A FEW NATIONAL REMINISCENCES.

BY M. HAVERTY.

THE social aspect of Rome at this moment, is as singular as its political situation is unprecedented. Its dense population is composed of elements as heterogeneous as ever were held together in one body politic. Internally it is a volcano which might at any moment burst into open eruption; externally it is a model of decorum and tranquillity. Its floating accession of foreign visitors has never been so small at this season of the year; and hence the hotels are empty, the art-galleries deserted, the painters and sculptors idle, and the unhappy workers in conchiglia and mosaic almost starving; but on the other hand, the Italian population has not for many years been more numerous. A great many disaffected persons linger by choice in the city, awaiting some indefinite prospect of a convulsion, and thousands who have suffered by the revolution in other parts of Italy, and who are attached heart and soul to the Pope's government, have flocked to Rome. In the throng of wayfarers whom we meet in the streets, the ecclesiastics are scarcely so numerous as they used to be; and unless when groups of students, chiefly belonging to the foreign colleges, proceed to or form lectures at the Propaganda or the Sapienza, or when processions of the poor Ca-

puchins accompany the dead to their last resting-place, they are seldom seen abroad in large numbers.

But the most singular feature in the social aspect of the Eternal City, is its vast foreign garrison. Now, indeed, it may be said, "the Gauls are in the Capitol," and not only in the Capitol, but in every strong place and thoroughfare, and almost in every house of Rome. Not only have the castle of St. Angelo, and the principal barracks been given up to the French army of occupation, but a large portion of each of the great monasteries, and in some cases, the entire of religious houses and palaces of the nobility, have been converted into military quarters for their accommodation. It is not unusual to see groups of barefooted friars and of French soldiers collected at different gates of the same convent, or at opposite sides of the same gate; and when the tambours and trumpeters of the various French regiments assemble an hour after Ave Maria, in the Piazza Colonna, to sound the evening retreat, all Rome echoes with the thunder which they create. In a word, the strategic occupation of Rome by the French is most complete; but while the city is thus as it were filled with French soldiers, while we meet them in every caffè and at every step in the principal thoroughfares, it is impossible not to be struck by their admirable demeanour. Never was there military discipline more perfect than theirs. Sober and peaceful in their conduct; cheerful, good humoured, and unreserved in their manner; polite and affable to all; many of them even religious, they offend neither man nor woman, and exhibit none of that bravado so often indulged in by the powerful, who undertake the protection of the weak.

Besides those of the French army, a variety of military uniforms are now to be seen in the streets of Rome. A certain portion of the Pope's Italian army still remains, and is undergoing a re-organisation which was sadly required. The men are more easily distinguished from the French by their darker complexions, and by an air of unsoldierlike indolence, than by their uniforms; and in moving through the streets, they exhibit less regard than their Gallic allies for the feelings or convenience of the *bourgeoisie*. Their value for the defence of the city would apparently be small indeed. Then there is the legion of the Franco-Belges, whose grey, zouave uniform is becoming every day more frequent in Rome. This new force is composed, as its name indicates, partly of Frenchmen and partly of Belgians; but it is mainly recruited from the ranks of the legitimist party in France, who have flocked to the Pope's standard with a zeal augmented by the dubious character of Louis Napoleon's policy towards the Holy Father. Scions of the most noble houses in France have entered this legion; men of the rank of count and marquis have not disdained to serve as non-commissioned officers, or even private soldiers; and the whole corps would appear to be composed of young men of education and gentlemanly bearing.

Nor must we overlook the bright green uniform of St. Patrick's brigade, of which some thirty men or more still remain in Rome, admittedly as the nucleus of a

corps, and possibly of a permanent one, yet to be formed in the Pope's service. The late Irish brigade in Rome was hastily called into existence, and during its brief career, laboured under many disadvantages. Agencies most hostile to its success were actively at work from the beginning, and with the smallest amount of preparatory drill, almost without any time to inure it to military discipline, it was placed in the very foremost ranks in battle; and then, too, under circumstances so hopeless, against numbers so overwhelming, and with so much Italian treachery and Swiss cowardice to dishearten it, on its own side! Yet, in a position so trying, the conduct of these raw Irish recruits was worthy of veteran soldiers; their steadfastness and bravery won the applause of their general, and are questioned by no one; and on the whole, it may be truly said that they were not unworthy of the country which sent out the famous "Brigade" of old. The few "men in green," who still remain in Rome, are active, good-looking fellows, soldier-like, and well disciplined, nor are there, we believe, braver men in the garrison. We had the pleasure of seeing them to great advantage not many weeks since, when they were mustered in the nave of the Church of St. Agatha, and exhorted in beautiful words of advice and encouragement, by his Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Dixon, Primate of all Ireland, then on a visit to Rome; the professors and students of the Irish Collage being at the same time assembled round the altar of that ancient church, and several other Irishmen, lay and clerical, being present.

A discussion of the "Roman question," either in its political or religious aspect, might be considered out of place in these pages, but there is at least, no reason why we should not describe what we have witnessed as travellers, or tell the impressions made on us as ordinary observers. We cannot avoid a passing word upon this parade of foreign soldiery, which makes the Eternal City so unlike what it used to be—on this army of occupation, and this flocking of French, Irish, Belgians, and other volunteers to the standard of the Pope. We all know that the object of all this is to protect the Holy Father, as the sovereign of a certain temporal principality; to protect him, in fact, against two sorts of enemies—against external aggressors, who have no ground of warfare except such as the highwayman has against the traveller; and against the disaffected section of his own subjects. The one set of foes pretend that they would make Rome the capital of "United Italy," and the other simply want to overturn the existing government; but as to "United Italy," it will be found a fiction; nor is Rome apparently fitted by nature to be the capital of a great modern empire; while the turbulent friction among the Romans themselves is far from comprising either the largest or the best portion of the people. Those men who go about the streets of Rome, or lounge in its coffee-houses, muffled in large cloaks, and carrying stilettoes in their coat-sleeves or their bosoms; those half-educated men who never enter a church, who regard religion as a bugbear, and who love intrigue and secret societies, are to a

man disaffected. They are a class who, in any country, would dislike the existing government, but to whom the government of Rome is doubly obnoxious, identified as it is with the dreaded restraints of religion. Were they in our own country, where priests have no temporal power, they would nevertheless detest them; how much more so then must they feel exasperated under a rule in which a priest is at the very head of temporal authority! All these men carry on the business of their secret societies with impunity in Rome. They all recognize each other, they collect every where in small groups, and are organised by a committee. They all voted the other day the so-called "plebiscitum," to make Victor Emmanuel their king. Nor was this any secret to the Roman police, who, however, have seldom distinguished themselves by their diligence either in preventing crime, or detecting its perpetrators. The proceedings are also known to the French authorities in Rome, but these, conscious of their own ability to crush any attempt of the revolutionists, look upon the latter only with silent contempt; and while the disaffected are encouraged by this forbearance, by the success of the revolution in their neighbourhood, and by a secret hope that the French Emperor may yet abandon the cause of the Pope; the Holy Father, on the other side, is placed in such a position that he cannot introduce the reforms which he would willingly concede, and in which his paternal heart would really keep pace with all that is desirable and practicable in the popular demands.

An eminent Irish barrister, and member of the British legislature, who has more than once favoured the world with the results of his observations in Italy, has, in a recent production, given us a vivid description of the classic wilderness which surrounds Rome. "When I stood on the campagna," he writes, "I thought I was transported to a desert. You may imagine a city in the centre of a vast plain; not a house, or tree, or fence, or anything visible save a solitary peasant mounted on a shaggy pony, with a long wooden spear in his hand, driving a buffalo before him. All the grandeur and splendour of the campagna of ancient Rome are gone. In the days of Augustus, the aqueducts watered it—fertilized it—but they are broken and prostrate; their ruins attract your observation and wonder; all the splendour and richness of imperial power have vanished, and the campagna is a waste." These words were clearly written with a view to shew what desolation had been produced by the papal system of government; and the learned and eloquent author thus proceeds:—"Have you any conception of the horrors of a summer in that place? At the time of the cutting of the harvest in the environs of Rome, a scene of suffering is presented. The malaria encompasses the unfortunate mountaineers, who descend to save the harvest and earn a pittance for their children; a Roman citizen never ventures on the task. The reaper is infected with the disease, and in all probability dies; and thus there is a greater number of patients in the hospitals in Rome during the summer than at any other season of the year."

From this we are probably expected to conclude that

the popes are also responsible for the malaria; and so no doubt the class to whom these words were addressed by Mr. Whiteside, do imagine: but the next sentence dissipates at least that charge; for it is added that if Hannibal did not march against Rome during the time the malaria prevailed, it was because he knew he would lose more men by disease than by battle! The malaria, then, was as deadly in Hannibal's time as in our own; the campagna was in fact always insalubrious, notwithstanding the numerous small towns which existed in remote antiquity along its borders; and no human industry, no wealth nor enterprise, will ever be able to convert that pestilential plain into a healthful garden. As to the long lines of broken arches which form so grand a feature in that scene of desolation, we should remember that modern science has discovered more convenient modes of conveying water than by those ancient Roman aqueducts; and Mr. Whiteside, in his admiration of ancient hydraulics, has omitted the fact that modern Rome, through the munificence of her popes, and the ingenuity of her engineers, happens to enjoy better water and a more copious supply of it than any other city in Europe. Her public fountains send forth rivers of the purest water, and jets of the same play into marble basins in the yard of almost every house in the city.

Twelve hundred years ago, when Rome was abandoned by the Emperors, its temporal sovereignty, as a result of their desertion, devolved upon the sovereign pontiff. Iconoclast viceroys, Exarchs of Ravenna, Counts of Tusculum, and other petty and semi-barbarous tyrants, in the dark and gloomy ages which followed, did all that lay in human power to destroy the Imperial city. Its helpless population clung for protection to the successor of St. Peter, who alone in all the world stood up manfully for the injured people, and in virtue of his spiritual authority which all recognised, alone defended the helpless against the spoiler in those lawless times. But for the popes of that day we should, no doubt, have some modern Layard excavating for the doubtful ruins of Rome among her seven nameless hills, as in another Nineve: her vestiges might be as obscure as those of her predecessor, Alba Longa, or of the more modern Tusculum. The power so freely given and so well deposited was recognized, confirmed, extended by the Christian emperors of the West, and the States of the Church were soon clearly defined and established as an independent principality. Where then is the dynasty so ancient, or founded in so much justice, as that of the elective sovereigns of Rome? Even Mr. Whiteside, as a lawyer, cannot help admitting that "so far as law is concerned," the Roman territory is the pope's "by right," and that to deprive him of it would be an act of robbery.

But besides the right of dominion, and that right which is involved in the fact, that to the popes modern Rome owes its very existence, there is a still more sacred right—a right arising out of the mission for which the temporal sovereignty of the popes was established and maintained,—out of its necessity for the free exercise of their

spiritual authority; and so fixed has this right become in the opinion of the Catholic world, that were revolution successful at this moment, and Pius IX. expelled from the Vatican, the *fait accompli* would be regarded by Catholic Christendom as only a temporary sacrilege, which should, and unquestionably would, be wiped out as soon as possible.

The papal government has been truly designated as *sui generis*; it can never be wholly assimilated to any of the civil governments of Europe. It is one in which religion and its interests must always predominate over temporal concerns. It may be too patriarchal, or if you will, too medieval, to suit the tastes of modern *illuminati*. There has been too much of the "laissez faire" way about it; too much mercy, and tenderness towards evil-doers. The stern dictates of justice too easily yield to the relents of pity. Yet is not all this the very thing that is to be expected from a system in which a religion always merciful, constitutes the most essential element? But if the governing power in Rome be sometimes too moderate, it happens, unfortunately, that the governed are an indolent, unenterprising—shall we say effete?—race, into whom it appears a hopeless task to infuse anything like energy. Religion, and its hand-maids, the fine arts, have maintained a degree of refinement in the character of the modern Romans, but there is nevertheless much truth in the remark, that they are only "half civilized." There is a cry for secularising the executive; yet if this were entirely possible, it would still be, apparently, the very worst thing that could be done in the present state of society there. The Roman laity are the most unfit for active duties of any of the same class in Europe. Education of the highest order is offered to them gratuitously; indeed education is almost forced upon the humbler classes, yet, strange to say, few profit by it to any great extent except the clergy. This is strikingly illustrated in the contrast between the lay and the clerical employés of the government; the former of whom are vastly more numerous than the latter, notwithstanding the outcry raised on the subject by a hostile press. Some departments are, we should suppose, wholly in the hands of the laity, such as those of the police and the customs; and as it is with these departments that strangers are most apt to come in contact, they have unhappily too many opportunities of experiencing the insolence and imbecility of the lay underlings; while, did the occasion offer, they would find the ecclesiastical functionaries, in their own proper departments, clear-sighted, active, obliging, and just.

One amelioration has assuredly been effected within the last year in Rome. The Swiss incabus has we trust been exploded. Introduced originally to form a mere body-guard, the Swiss mercenaries distinguished themselves in past times by their fidelity, and often by their bravery; but by degrees they crept into many places of power and emolument, and at length Swiss influence pervaded almost every department of the state. This influence was brought to bear, with all the jealous hatred of rivals, against the Irish and other

volunteers who entered the Pope's service last year; and on this occasion, strange to say, Italians, whether disaffected or otherwise, and Swiss, seemed to make common cause. The mind of even the Papal minister of war was poisoned by Swiss intrigue, but when the day of trial came, the Swiss bubble burst, and it was found that incompetency, cowardice, and dishonesty were its chief ingredients. Such things will evermore occur: under any system too much confidence is liable to be abused; but although a Swiss guard is still retained at the Vatican, it is to be hoped that the Swiss influence will never again recover its former power in Rome.

From these things, to which a traveller cannot possibly close his eyes in Rome, and which to a Catholic are so full of interest, we turn to others more congenial to the spirit of the *Hibernian Magazine*, and upon which a recent journey to the Eternal City has enabled us to say a word or two. We refer to some things in particular, which to an Irishman visiting Rome, if he have the smallest ingredient of nationality in his nature, are scarcely less interesting than the monuments of art and classic antiquity for which that city is above all others celebrated. Thus in the northern aisle of the ancient church of St. Agatha de' Gothi, annexed to the Irish college, he will find the mural monument which encloses the heart of Daniel O'Connell—that heart which loved Ireland so well, but which the dying Liberator himself bequeathed to Rome, towards which he was journeying when death overtook him at Genoa. The monument, which is a relief in white marble, by the eminent Roman sculptor Benzoni, the friend of Hogan, is, as our readers are aware, the munificent tribute of Charles Bianconi to O'Connell's memory. In the upper part of the work, an allegorical group represents the seated figure of Erin mourning over a funeral urn, while an angel appears and points to heaven as the home to which the spirit of the illustrious man over whom she weeps has fled. This portion is in high relief, and immediately beneath it is the inscription; while the lower part of the monument consists of a bas-relief representing O'Connell refusing to take the anti-Catholic declaration at the bar of the House of Commons in 1829.

While toiling up the steep side of the Janiculum the Irish traveller approaches a spot associated with some of the most sorrowful memories of his country's history. Near the summit of the hill stands the church of St. Pietro-in-Montorio, from the terrace in front of which the finest panoramic view of Rome, and of the Campagna, with its frame-work of hills, is obtained. In the cloister adjoining the church is the spot on which, according to tradition, the Prince of the Apostles was crucified, and on which stands a famous gem of architecture—the small circular temple erected by Bramante for Philip III. and Ferdinand IV., kings of Spain, to commemorate the event. But although these things, and the many works of art within the church be most important objects of the traveller's admiration or veneration, it is not for them that we now invite the Irish pilgrim to the spot, but to visit two grave-

stones which he will find in the pavement of the church, in front of the tribune, and a little to the gospel side—the graves, or we should properly say cenotaphs, of the last princes of Tyrone and Tirconnell, who struggled against English power for their religion and their nation. After the siege of Rome in 1849, it was stated that this church had been almost wholly reduced to ruins by the French cannon, the principal point of attack being in this quarter; and there was some fear that the tombs of the Irish chiefs had shared in the demolition. However, we are glad to say that the injuries to the walls and roof of the church, which were not so extensive as reported, have been long since repaired; and that while the work of restoration was in progress, the opportunity was taken to refresh the inscriptions over the heroic O'Neills and O'Donnells, wherever they were partially effaced by time. At the same time the armorial bearings, and the arabesque borders, which are inlaid in precious marbles in the manner of Florentine mosaic, were completely restored; but when the two enormous white marble slabs which contain the epitaphs were raised, their great thickness excited the cupidity of the workmen, who were proceeding to saw them, for the purpose of taking away half the thickness of the marble, on the pretence that the remainder would be sufficient. At this juncture some students from the Irish college fortunately visited the works, and made a report of what they witnessed to their superiors, who addressed a timely representation on the subject to the cardinal-protector of the church, and thus prevented the contemplated spoliation. It appears nearly certain that these epitaphs were cut during the lifetime of the great Hugh, earl of Tyrone, as they commemorate the death of his son, Hugh, baron of Dungannon, who died in September, 1609, and of his kinsmen, prince Roderick O'Donnell, earl of Tirconnell, and Caffar, brother of the latter, both of whom died in the autumn of 1608, while they make no mention of his own death, which did not take place until 1616. We may also conclude from the dates of their death, that these illustrious exiles sunk under the effects of climatic disease, which accelerated the work of sorrow and disappointment, and it is probable that their remains were interred, not immediately under the slabs which contain their epitaphs, but somewhere in the vaults of the church, where they may possibly be hereafter discovered.

With the impressions left on our minds by these memorials of the unfortunate but heroic Irish chieftains of the times of Elizabeth and James I., we cannot do better than pay a visit to the Irish Franciscan college of St. Isidore. What thoughts crowd upon us in this venerable asylum of Irish piety and learning! Its origin brings us down a step later in our history than the tombs in St. Pietro-in-Montorio—down, in fact, to the exciting epoch of the civil war of 1641, and of the confederation of Kilkenny, in the affairs of which the founder of this conventual college, the celebrated Father Luke Wadding, took so important a part. The cloisters, the frescoed halls, the library, the tombs, of St. Isidore's, are full of retrospective interest for Irishmen; but not to

detain our readers with descriptions of what many of them must be already familiar with, we shall only add here a few words about the present state of the Irish historical MSS. preserved in the convent archives, which we are enabled to do through the courtesy of the pious and learned guardian, the Very Rev. Dominic Kehoe, O.S.F., in whose company we had the satisfaction, on a recent occasion, of making, for the second time, a hasty examination of these most interesting records. The MSS. in the Irish language are, we believe, in pretty nearly the same state in which they were found more than twenty years ago by the late Rev. Dr. Lyons of Mayo, when he made fac-similes of the titles, etc., by which Dr. O'Donovan and Professor Curry were enabled to place before the Royal Irish Academy a catalogue of these manuscript treasures. Neither on the present nor on a former occasion, some sixteen years since, did we observe the second volume of the *Annals of the Four Masters* in the collection; but the first volume, which is invaluable, as containing the autograph approbations, etc., is in excellent preservation. The Wadding papers, which have been stitched up in four thick volumes, and have been recently enveloped carefully in plain wrappers, are of priceless value, many of the documents being originals and unique. Three of the volumes are composed of letters and other documents relating almost exclusively to the ecclesiastical affairs of Ireland during the first half of the seventeenth century, and they are indispensable to a writer of Irish ecclesiastical history for that period. Several of the letters are in Spanish or Italian, and the remainder in Latin or English. Among them are some commendatory letters and official authentications, signed by the titular Earls of Tyrone and Tirconnell, who lived in exile on the Continent during and subsequent to the reign of James I. The fourth volume is composed of political documents relating to Irish affairs chiefly during the years 1641 and 1642, the greater number being reports sent to Rome on the progress of the war in Ireland, and signed by Mathew Hartigan, Edmund Dwyer, or Hugo de Burgo. Those signed by de Burgo are the most numerous, and are in Spanish, and Father Dwyer makes frequent use of cypher in his letters. There is a letter occupying three full pages, but almost illegible, to which the signature of Roger O'More, in Irish, has been attached in an ink different from that of the body of the letter. Few, however, of the documents in this important collection will have more interest for the historian than the letters of Owen Roe O'Neill, which are very numerous and chiefly in Italian, being penned probably by his chaplain, but all having the boldly-written autograph of the illustrious Irish general himself—"Don Eug^a. O'Neill." Two or three of these letters are dated from Brussels, and were written before Owen Roe came to Ireland, to assume the command of the confederated Catholics, and one which found its way among the ecclesiastical documents, and is written in Latin, and dated "From our camp at Cavan, 18th May, 1649," is the latest which we perceive from his pen. It was written some three months after the departure of

Rinuocini from Ireland, and its tone indicates the hopeless state in which the affairs of the Irish Catholics then were. The four volumes comprise several autograph letters of Father Luke Wadding and Father John Colgan; also rescripts of Popes, and letters of the King of Spain; some being only marked as "copia vera." Baldearg O'Donnell's vindication of himself to the Spanish court for leaving Spain without permission, to join the standard of James II. in Ireland, is in MS.; and is headed "Manifiesto del Maestro de campo, D. Hugo O'Donel, Conde de Tiroconel, iustificando su particencia al Reyno de Irlanda sin licencia de su Magd. Catolica." It occupies six pages of letter paper openly written; and we have no doubt that it will be found to coincide with some of the original statements given in the papers on the O'Donnell family by Dr. O'Donovan, in the early numbers of this Magazine.

But the dusty MSS. of the archivium of St. Isidore's have, we fear, too much attraction for us. We trust the time will yet come when the originals or copies of these important historical documents, will be accessible to the students of Irish history in one of our national institutions at home; for the present we must deny ourselves the pleasure of lingering any longer among them, nor shall we now delay to visit other places in Rome of national interest to us, as the Irish Augustinian college of St. Maria in Posterola; or the venerable Irish Dominican house of St. Clemente, where the learned Irish prior, Father Mullooly, has made one of the most important discoveries of our time in Roman antiquities, namely, the subterranean church of St. Clement built by Constantine the Great, in the consulship of Ursus and Polemius, (A.D. 338.) It was in this church that the heresy of Pelagius was first condemned, and on its walls is still visible a fresco of the Blessed Virgin and Child of that period. We shall conclude this brief sketch, suggested by a recent run to the Eternal City, with a sincere prayer that Rome and her sanctuaries may never be seen under the protection of Victor Emmanuel, whose power commenced, and has grown up in chicane, aggression, mean subserviency, and irreligion.

LITERARY NOTICES.

CHARLOTE GRANGE.*

ALTHOUGH there be "nothing new under the sun," still new complications of existing things constantly arise, and give every day some fresh variety to human life, which the writer of fiction, who wishes to portray nature truly, will not fail to turn to account. Thus, even in the apparent monotony of fashionable life, fresh elements will be found from time to time by the novelist; and thus it is that the work before us—which we can scarcely recognise as a fashionable novel, it is so much higher in its scope, and differs in so many material points from works of that class, but which, nevertheless, is wholly a tale of fashionable life—could not possibly

* *Charlotte Grange*, a Tale, by LADY CHARLES THYNNE. Dublin: JAMES DUFFY, Wellington-quay, and 22, Paternoster Row, London.

have been written twenty years ago. The gifted lady, to whose pen we are indebted for this and for many other very agreeable tales has, in fact, chosen for the groundwork of her story the religious movement towards Catholicity, which in recent years has so profoundly occupied the thoughts of persons in the highest and most educated circles of English society. She has undertaken to delineate the feelings produced by that movement in certain sensitive and intellectual natures; the first misgivings about security in the English church, the unexpected and often unaccountable ways in which suggestions and information come about these matters, the social obstacles which arise, the working of conscience in different minds—some so earnest and disinterested and generous, others so diffident and shrinking, or so much entangled by the meshes of the world—the fierce, unreasoning hatred of bigots, the soothing influence of Catholicity into the bosom of which she finally conducts all those for whom she had enlisted the sympathies of the reader in the progress of the story. No one, we believe, can be more fitted to describe all these feelings with fidelity than our accomplished author. Lady Charles Thynne is, if we do not err, the daughter of a bishop of the established church; and her husband, the Rev. Lord Charles Thynne, son of the Marquis of Bath, together with his wife, embraced the Catholic faith some years ago, at the cost of two or three lucrative benefices which he held in the Church of England. Thus must Lady Thynne have become most intimately acquainted with the workings of the mind in the state of religious transition; and not only with those of her own mind, but with the corresponding thoughts which agitated the minds of many in her large circle of refined and intelligent acquaintances. Knowing these circumstances, we take up her book with no little interest, and although we do not presume that it contains anything of autobiography, we feel that it describes highly interesting realities. The book does not contain anything of controversy; there is not a single sentence in it which need hurt the feelings of a person of either creed. The scene always passes in the retirement of private life. There is nothing introduced to dazzle or surprise—nothing even to pain the feelings very much. There are no startling incidents, although quite sufficient to keep up the interest in the story. The dialogue is easy and graceful, free from affectation, and well adapted to the classes of society to which the interlocutors belong. Finally, the characters are extremely well drawn; several minute traits and shades of character are portrayed with singular truthfulness and delicacy; even the ways and disposition of a child are depicted with a natural tenderness of touch, which cannot fail to enlist the reader's interest, and there is a suitability in the destinies of the various persons introduced, which leaves nothing to be desired. Thus, in a word, although possessing all the propriety and a good deal of the tame-ness which belong to a picture of fashionable life, *Charlotte Manor* is a tale well calculated to interest the reader, and to leave elevating as well as pleasing impressions on the mind.